First Edition

BEHIND THE MANIPULATION

THE ART OF ADVERTISING COPYWRITING

William Barre

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For Viv

My wife and my light

Contents

Preface vii

Introduction ix

SETTING THE STAGE 1

Chapter One: The Basics 3

Chapter Two: The Advent of Modern American Consumerism: Book One of the Advertising Bible 11

Chapter Three: Strategic Theory: Book Two of the Advertising Bible 19

BRINGING THE STRATEGY TO LIFE: CREATIVE EXECUTION 35

Chapter Four: How to Be a *Creative* Copywriter 37

Chapter Five: Wordsmithing in Print 53

Chapter Six: Wordsmithing in Radio 75

Chapter Seven: Wordsmithing in TV 85

Chapter Eight: Wordsmithing Out-of-Home 109

Chapter Nine: Wordsmithing on the Internet 115

Chapter Ten: How to Do Campaigns 124

MAKING A LIVING 139

Chapter Eleven: Career Advice 141

Chapter Twelve: Building Your Portfolio and Finding a Job 147

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER 155

Chapter Thirteen: Working with the Creative Briefs 157

Chapter Fourteen: The Creative Briefs 165

Chapter Fifteen: Odds and Ends 179

Epilogue 187

Resources 189

Appendix 191

Selected Bibliography 197

Image Credits 199

Preface

This book is an instructive tool for learning the manipulative art of advertising copywriting. It's a copywriting class in a book. But the give-and-take that happens between my students and me can't be completely recreated in a book. Students in my copywriting classes do as many as 25 different assignments, including 12 or 13 full campaigns. I critique them all and give the students the essential feedback they need to improve. Then, based on my comments and suggestions, the students make revisions and I go over their work again. It's a lot like a lively game of mental ping pong. This give-and-take is essential to learning any skill. But, sadly, that's beyond the scope of this book—or any other copywriting book. What I can do here is get you on the right track by teaching you everything I know about advertising and advertising copywriting. Along the way, I include useful exercises and campaign creative briefs so you can apply what you have learned. Hopefully, this will lead you to putting together your portfolio (called a "book" in advertising) and getting the job you want. It won't be easy. Nothing worthwhile ever is. I tell my students that learning copywriting is like banging your head against a brick wall. You're going to get bloody. But if you keep banging, the brick wall *will* crumble. For some, the brick wall crumbles quickly, whereas others will be enveloped in the "fog of learning" much longer. But, if you stick to it, the wall *will* crumble. And then you're on your way.

Introduction

WHAT'S THE POINT?

The purpose of this book is to teach you the fundamental skills of copywriting for *brand* advertising. There are other forms of advertising—classified advertising in newspapers; promotional advertising of sales, deals, and grand openings; small-space advertising in magazines; and so on. We're not concerned with those kinds of advertising. We're strictly concerned with *brand* advertising. The reason is because that's where the fun is. That's where the money is. And that's where the professional satisfaction is. As a professional copywriter, the further you move away from *brand* advertising, the less happy you'll be. So start, at least, by aspiring to write *brand* advertising. Then, if it doesn't work out, move to plan B.

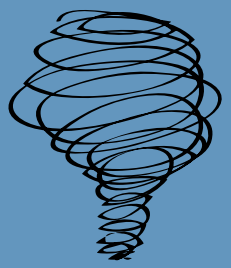
Brand advertising's objective is to create and support a brand *personality* that enables and justifies the brand's premium pricing. **Premium pricing** simply means charging more money for the brand. Because brands are inanimate objects, of course, they don't actually have personalities. That's where the magic of brand advertising comes in. Like real magic, all great advertising manipulates its audience. From strategy to execution, this book teaches you how to work that magic.

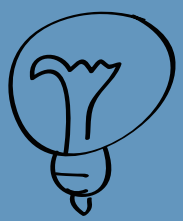
It will take a lot of practice. Learning to actually *do* something is much harder than learning *about* something. When you learn to do something, you're learning a skill. You can't just talk about it. You have to do it. To be proficient at that skill takes practice—trial and error. For example, I can talk intelligently about building a house, but I can't actually *do* it. I don't have the skill. Copywriting is no different. Copywriting is a skill, and a very difficult one to master. The art of manipulation, via advertising copywriting, is a demanding taskmaster. But if you follow my guidance, by the time you finish this book, you won't just be able to talk about copywriting, you'll be able to do it.

HOLD ON ... IT'S GOING TO BE A BUMPY RIDE

Working in advertising is a lot like being on a roller coaster—especially on the creative side of the business, as either a copywriter or an art director. There are steep climbs, stomach-churning dives, unrelenting twists and turns, and impossible loops and flips. People who thrive in advertising *love* the "roller coaster." They're easily bored, crave excitement, and are "new freaks." The focus of this book is copywriting and the advertising strategy that precedes it. But most of this book applies equally to the copywriter's partner at the agency—the art director. At any reputable ad agency, the copywriter and art director work together as a team. They're connected at the hip, picking each other's brains—ideas flying

wildly between them. It's an exhilarating way to work. And live. For the right kind of person, creating advertising is the ride of a lifetime. If you think you're that kind of person, hop aboard. You won't always be happy, but I guarantee you'll never be bored.





Part One

Setting the Stage

Chapter One

The Basics

I bet you just can't wait to jump into being creative. You are just bursting with ideas, headlines, and TV spots. I don't blame you. That's the fun part and the reason you bought this book. But before we get to all of that we have to start with some fundamentals and lay the foundation, just as you would if you were building a house. You need to learn the fundamentals of *why* we are doing *brand* advertising and where and how it fits into the broader discipline of business and marketing.

I've taught advertising at two different universities for a total of nine consecutive years, and no advertising student could take the advertising copywriting course before taking the introductory course in marketing communications, of which advertising is just one subdiscipline. That course sets the stage for all the advertising courses that follow, including copywriting. Because I don't know how much you know about marketing, marketing communications, and advertising specifically, these first few chapters will give you a quick education in the basics. Resist jumping ahead. In a tutorial book like this, reading it from front to back will dramatically improve your learning. The chapters in this book build upon one another, and I firmly believe that the sequence in which you learn something is very important to your overall understanding. So please hold onto those great ideas and headlines for just a bit longer. I promise to make these first few chapters almost as fun as the actual copywriting.

FIRST, IT'S ALL ABOUT PEOPLE …

Ultimately, the business of brand advertising is people. We call them consumers, but first and foremost they are people. The more you know about people the more effective your advertising will be. The principles discussed in this book are straightforward, but the people to whom they are directed are not. People are complicated, complex, nonrational, and impulsive, and every year billions of dollars are spent on consumer research trying to understand them. But we never

completely will. The very consumers themselves often don't know why they behave as they do in the marketplace. For example, research tells us that nearly 70 percent of all consumer purchases are based on *impulse*. To say it another way—consumers can't explain them. That's why consumers are the wild card in brand advertising. They make brand advertising what it is—complicated, complex, fascinating. This book will help you understand brand advertising, but we will never completely understand the people to whom it is directed.

THEN IT'S ALL ABOUT THE TARGET MARKET . . .

Advertising is never directed to everyone. There needs to be a target for it. That target is called the **target market**. You can't do any creative work until you know who that target market is. So if someone asks you to do a campaign, the first thing you should ask them is, "Who's the target market?" Until you know that, you're dead in the water. As a creative, you usually don't have input as to who comprises the target market. This is done by any number of people inside and outside the agency, including the client, independent research companies, the agency's account planners and/or account managers, independent branding agencies, etc. Knowing the target market is so vital because it is the natural starting point for any creative and will dictate your entire campaign. Here's a simple example of why. Imagine a campaign for Mountain Dew that's directed to 12-year-olds. Now imagine a campaign for Mountain Dew that's directed to 40-year-olds. As you know, 12-year-olds have very little in common with 40-year-olds, so the levers of manipulation have to be different, too. Target markets gather people into groups that are similar in age, income, education, marital status, children or no children, number of children, where they live in the country (would you want to introduce a new convertible in California or Alaska?), and sometimes ethnicity (think of the huge Latino/Hispanic target markets) and even race. The Internet has enabled marketers to more narrowly define target markets because they can use cookies to track consumers' online activity. There may be a day when each individual will receive an advertising message completely customized to him or her. But as of now, that's a long way off. In the meantime, in order to create brand messages that resonate with consumers, we have to group them into target markets. As a creative, knowing the target market is the essential first step in working your magic.

AND THEN IT'S ALL ABOUT ME!

Upon seeing any kind of advertising, every person asks himself or herself the big question: "What's in it for me?" It's your job as a creative to answer that question quickly and simply. Consumers won't work to find out "What's in it for me?" You have to spoon-feed it to them. Your advertising needs to be completely focused on answering that vital question. The answer doesn't have to be hard-sell or unpleasant—just *clear*. If it isn't, consumers will move on. If you don't have the target market's attention, you can't do anything else. You can't make them aware. You can't persuade. You can't manipulate. To visualize this vital principle, I have two students

come to the front of the class, face each other, and begin conversing. Then I jump *between* them and start talking about my brand. That's advertising. It dramatizes something you should never forget—consumers are pursuing their lives and advertising is always trying to get between them and whatever it is they are pursuing. "You're looking for love? We're Matchmaker.com, we can find you love." "You want to be sexier to women? We're Axe, we can make you sexier to women." And so on and so forth. It's *vital* for you to remember that our consumers aren't pursuing us, we're pursuing them. They don't care about our brand or advertising; we have to *make* them care by answering the question they are all asking themselves upon seeing our ad—"What's in it for me?" Everything in your advertising, regardless of the medium—the visual, the headline, the body copy, the music, the actors—should all be directed to answering that question.

WHERE ADVERTISING FITS

If I were in a meeting and began expounding that the sun revolved around the earth, what would you think of me? I can hear your answers—at best you would think me misinformed, at worst a total loon. The same is true in our "solar system" of business. It is important to know where things fit. What is the pecking order of disciplines? How do the disciplines and subdisciplines relate to one another, and which is subservient to which?

Here's where we'll start. Every business, regardless of its type or size, includes three broad disciplines: finance, manufacturing/operations, and marketing. This book is not concerned with the first two—finance and manufacturing/operations. Although they certainly affect marketing, they are separate disciplines and require separate study. This book is only concerned with marketing.

The discipline of marketing can be broken into several subdisciplines. If you've taken a marketing course, the list might be slightly different, but these are the most relevant for me:

- Distribution
- Pricing
- Couponing (a short-term change in pricing for tactical advantage)
- Product development (both new product brands and refinements in existing brands)
- Packaging
- Packaging graphics
- Marketing communications (MARCOM for short)

All of these subdisciplines of marketing are the tools marketers use to market products and services under various brand names. From this list, we are only concerned with the last tool—marketing communications (MARCOM). We'll leave the other six to the marketing professors.

It's worth noting here that marketing communications, by its very name, is subservient to marketing. Marketers use marketing-communications devices to communicate with their target markets. Think of it this way—marketing is the "dog" and marketing-communications devices are the "tail." And the tail never wags the dog.

Just as marketing has several subdisciplines, so, too, does marketing communications. Once again, my list might differ slightly from others, but these are the nine most relevant to me:

- Public relations
- Direct response (direct mail; direct-response commercials, such as infomercials)
- Events
- Sales promotion (contests, games, sweepstakes, free merchandise—online and off-line)
- Collateral (brochures, sales sheets, product sheets)
- Interactive (the Internet can be used in two ways—as a two-way interactive experience, most notably in social media, blogs, forums, and websites *and* as an *advertising medium* in which the message of the advertising is received *passively* by the target market and no response or interaction with them is sought, desired, or expected)
- Trade shows
- Brand placement (seamless inclusion of brands in movies, TV shows, video games)
- Advertising (newspaper, magazines, radio, TV, cinema, out-of-home, Internet as a medium)

Of these nine marketing-communications devices, or vehicles, this book is only concerned with advertising.

But how do we distinguish advertising from the other eight? How do we know if it's advertising and not one of the other eight marketing-communications devices? Well, I think this definition will make it clear: **Advertising is a persuasive communication in a paid medium by an identified sponsor.**

So, in order for it to be advertising three criteria must be met:

1. Persuasive communication
2. Paid medium
3. Identified sponsor

If the subdiscipline you're considering does not contain *all three* of these, then it's not advertising. It must be one of the other marketing-communication subdisciplines.

The distinction is important because this book is about *advertising copywriting*, not copywriting in the other MARCOM subdisciplines. All of the other MARCOM subdisciplines utilize copywriting. In fact, you could have a long and successful copywriting career in any one of them without ever being an advertising copywriter. But in this book, we are going to focus on *advertising copywriting*.

As stated in the second part of the definition above, one of the key differences between advertising and the other MARCOM subdisciplines is that advertising is always disseminated via a medium. A

medium is the device that carries the advertising message to the target market; it's the singular usage of word "media." So you will learn how to write advertising copy for a variety of media (plural of medium). These media include print (magazines and newspapers), TV (broadcast and cable), cinema (advertising in movie theaters), radio, out-of-home (outdoor billboards, transit, airport advertising, etc.), and the Internet. As I mentioned earlier, the Internet wears two "hats." It's a medium because it carries the advertising message by the use of banner ads, pop-up commercials, YouTube pre-rolls, etc. that are *one-way* communications to the target market that they *passively* receive. In that respect, the Internet as a medium is just like any other medium—TV, cinema, radio, print, or out-of-home. But, unlike the other media, the Internet also wears another "hat"—an *interactive* one—in which the communication is not one way but *two way*. In other words, our target market is encouraged and expected to talk back. Good examples of the Internet as an interactive marketing-communications device include all social media—YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr—as well as blogs, forums, websites, and literally thousands of other sites that encourage and solicit *two-way* communication. This use of the Internet by corporations and brands is a lot like digital public relations. They are trying to create positive buzz online about their companies and/or brands.

To wrap up, as an advertising copywriter, it's important to know where you fit. Always remember that advertising is just one of nine marketing-communications devices that marketers use to communicate with their target markets. Often, marketers will use several marketing-communications devices in the same campaign. When that happens, it's called **integrated marketing communications**, or **IMC** for short. Knowing where advertising fits in this larger scheme of things will make you a more successful advertising copywriter.

IT ALL STARTS WITH BRANDING

Brands are vital to advertising, and advertising is vital to brands. They are flip sides of the same coin, connected at the hip. One cannot exist without the other. But what exactly *is* branding?

If I show you an unbranded laptop, what do you think of it? Probably nothing. It's a "stranger" to you. If I put the Apple logo on it, now what do you think of it? Tons of mental images come to mind and, if you're an Apple user, you recognize it as a "friend." That's the power of branding. Successful branding takes a stranger and turns it into a friend—a friend with whom you can have a *relationship*. Brands become part of our lives. They become our friends, and even part of our families. But what *is* branding?

Branding is the process of taking a generic product and giving it a name and "face," just as you would take an anonymous person and give her a name and face. Think about your favorite brands. They have names—Gatorade, Coca-Cola, Cheerios. They have "faces"—their packaging, packaging graphics, logos, and colors.

But why would corporations want to go to all that trouble and expense? In one word, the answer is money. Brands are a corporation's most valuable assets. What's General Mills without Cheerios? It's just another anonymous grain company. What's Proctor & Gamble without Ivory and Irish Spring? It's just another anonymous soap company. Corporations brand because brands

take a *commodity* and turn it into a *specialty*. They take something that's *commonplace* and make it *unique*. Commodities are at the mercy of supply and demand and, therefore, market pricing. Brands *aren't*. When corporations turn commodities into brands—like Cheerios, Ivory, and Irish Spring—now *they* control the pricing. So they take cheese and turn it into Kraft Macaroni & Cheese. They take bananas and put a sticker on them and turn them into Dole bananas. They take bleach and turn it into Clorox bleach. The very act of branding gives corporations control over pricing *and* gives the brands derived from those commodities higher *perceived* value in consumers' minds. As a result of those two factors, brands invariably cost consumers more money. And that means more profits for the corporations that own them. Branding leads to more profits because branded products and services are always going to cost consumers more than unbranded ones and store brands (called private-label brands) that have no advertising support. They always carry premium pricing. In fact, the only reason to brand in the first place is to charge premium prices. Ultimately, that's the whole point of branding.

THE ROLE OF ADVERTISING IN BRANDING

Branding is vital to advertising because without a name and face there's nothing to advertise! Once a brand does have a name and face, however, then brand advertising can continue the transformation of the brand from "stranger" to "friend" by giving it a personality. It could be gentle, tough, fun, serious, or hundreds of other personalities. That personality is created and supported by the brand advertising.

But billions upon billions are spent on brand advertising every year. Why does it take so much money? The answer is this: corporations can't afford for consumers to forget about their brands. Once again go back to the human analogy. When you don't see a friend for a while you forget how important he was to you. It's the same with brands. When you don't hear from your brand "friends," you forget about them and you find other brand "friends." Or you begin buying an unadvertised store brand like Wal-Mart's Great Value and save the money because it doesn't carry premium pricing. The more you think of brands as people, the closer you will be to understanding how to advertise them.

Brands are people, too. Brands give love, too. Brands need love, too.

Brands give their consumers love. I know it sounds funny, but it's true. Brands get mixed up in our lives' deepest feelings and memories. That attachment begins for most of us when we're children. Brands are passed along to us from our parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends. They comfort us when we are tired, discouraged, and lonely. They remind us of family, friends, and loved ones who may have died. They become integral in our lives. They live, quite literally, in our hearts.

When you love another person, you are willing to do things for that person that you are not willing to do for those whom you don't love. The same principle holds true for brands. When we love a brand and what it conjures up for us, we are willing to pay *extra* to keep that brand in our lives. The brand becomes family, and family is worth lots more than money.

WE'RE NOT IN THE REALITY BUSINESS; WE'RE IN THE PERCEPTION BUSINESS

Here's a personal example. For me, Post Golden Crisp cereal, and its mascot the Sugar Bear, is family. I love the Sugar Bear. To me, it's not cereal, it's love. It's my mom and our old apartment. It conjures up all of those wonderful memories of when I was very young, loved, and very happy. Sure I could buy Aldi's puffed-wheat cereal for $1.49, but I spend $4.49 for the Sugar Bear. Why? Because the Sugar Bear isn't cereal! It's part of the family. It gives me love because it conjures lovely memories in my heart. $3.00 for love? That's cheap. I'd pay it any day. And you would, too, because you have brands that you love, just as I have the Sugar Bear. Everyone has brands like Post Golden Crisp. Those brands give us love. They give us comfort. They give us joy. They are brands that go beyond reason. They connect with us at a primal, visceral level that keeps us coming back for more. We return their love by buying them, even though they are often the most expensive brands in that product category. And that's just how corporations like it because when you love a brand you are willing to pay lots more money for it. In reality, Post could never make Golden Crisp worth $3.00 more than Aldi's puffed-wheat cereal. But through brand advertising, they can make you *think* that it is. *Feel* that it is. Because those are *perceptions*. And that's our business—the perception business. We don't care about reality because we can't manipulate reality. We can only manipulate our consumers' perceptions. We're not in the reality business; we're in the perception business. And in that business, anything is possible.

This book carries the title *Behind the Manipulation*. That manipulation starts with the branding and continues through to the strategy, and finally to the copywriting. Branding is manipulative because brands *aren't* people. They're inanimate objects and always will be. But as long as we can keep consumers thinking and *feeling* otherwise, then brands will continue to earn enormous profits for their corporations. As an advertising copywriter, you are an essential ingredient in this manipulation. You not only have to feel comfortable with this manipulation, you have to love it. Manipulation is essential to modern American consumerism because consumers don't need and don't want most of the brands and some are actually bad for them (think fast food, chips, soda, toxic household cleaners, etc.). As an advertising copywriter (along with your art director partner), you are the magician that transforms brands into people. This book will show you how to work that magic.

Chapter Two

The Advent of Modern American Consumerism: Book One of the Advertising Bible

Before about 1914 there were almost no brands. Products were sold in bulk. Consumers bought oatmeal, not Quaker Oats oatmeal. They washed with soap, not Ivory Soap. They cleaned their clothes with detergent, not Tide detergent. Back then, these products were commodities. And, because we perceived no difference in these commodities, we always bought those with the lowest prices. Commodities have no name. No face. No personality.

Whole Foods has a bulk-bin aisle where you can buy raisins, dates, oats, granola, and endless other bulk items. How do you feel about them? Exactly. You feel nothing. They conjure up neither family nor friends nor good times nor memories. They are just food stuffs and nothing more.

By about 1914, though, at the beginning of World War I in Europe, dramatic changes began to affect American consumerism. Our country was changing, and the way we consumed products and services began to change with it. This was the advent of modern American consumerism and the brand advertising that would result from it.

Three separate, but interrelated, forces brought about this sea change at this particular time: mass production, mass marketing, and mass communications. First, there was mass production. It dated back to the Industrial Revolution—around the 1830s in England and a bit later in this country. Instead of products being made by hand, one by one, they now could be made in mass by huge automated machines in huge factories that were often staffed around-the-clock. Mass production became so efficient at making goods cheaply and quickly that consumer demand could not keep up. Then the second part of the puzzle began to fit into place—mass distribution/marketing. By the early 1900s the country was blanketed with railroads. The railroads now made it possible to mass market all the products that had been mass produced and distribute them throughout the country. The last piece of the puzzle was mass communication. By the early 1900s there were thousands of newspapers around the country, but they were all local. Now that companies had mass production capability and mass marketing (distribution) capability,

they needed a way to communicate about these products in an equally massive way, not a local way. The solution was national magazines. A partial list of these early national publications includes *Harper's*, *Collier's*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*, and then *LIFE*, *Good Housekeeping*, and hundreds more. Now the puzzle was complete. Companies could mass produce, then mass distribute via the railroads, and, finally, mass communicate about them via national magazines. All of this came together at about the beginning of World War I in 1914. So, by 1917 when President Wilson needed to "sell" America's entry into World War I, the mass-communications infrastructure for his propaganda machine was already in place.

THE MANIPULATORS RISE TO THE OCCASION

In *Flapper*, Joshua Zeitz outlines how the first ad pioneers learned and refined their manipulative techniques during World War I. He writes that many of the first advertising pioneers cut their teeth by doing propaganda for the war. The most notable of them was Bruce Barton, one of the four founders of BBD&O, which became, and remains, one of the industry's largest ad agencies. Barton and his fellow "manipulators" did their jobs very well.

As Zeitz recounts, having promised in the 1916 presidential campaign to keep the United States out of the European war, Wilson was in a very tough position when he then declared war on Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1917. He needed to create a demand for the war where none existed. In fact, the European immigrants who came to this country did so in great part to escape such wars.

His administration turned to people like Barton to create demand where none existed, and these manipulators succeeded spectacularly. They turned a very unpopular, unnecessary war into a war of survival for the United States. And it was all manipulation. In World War II, our country's very existence and way of life were at stake, but this was not even remotely true of World War I. But the manipulators made a convincing case to the contrary.

At that time, Americans of German heritage were among the largest ethnic groups. Historically, our fight had always been with England, not Germany. Furthermore, unlike the Nazis in World War II, the Germans of World War I were no more responsible for World War I than the other major European powers—England, Russia, France, and Austro-Hungry. So, few Americans saw any reason to fight Germany. Americans had always prided themselves on staying out of European wars. So if the Wilson administration had no rational reason to go to war with Germany, then it had to create an emotional reason. That's where propaganda came in.

Their first job was to answer the question every American was asking, "Why are we fighting Germany?" According to Zeitz, the answer they came up with was not rational, but emotional. They had to demonize the Germans by making them seem subhuman. We were fighting Germany because Germans were "The Hun." They did it primarily with highly emotional appeals that hit the U.S. public right where they lived—in their hearts. Equally important, they did it visually (Figures 2.1–2.6). After all, there is a good reason why the adage "a picture is worth a thousand words" has survived—it's absolutely true. Tell your story visually and you tell it better than words ever could. That is just what Barton and his associates employed in winning over the public's

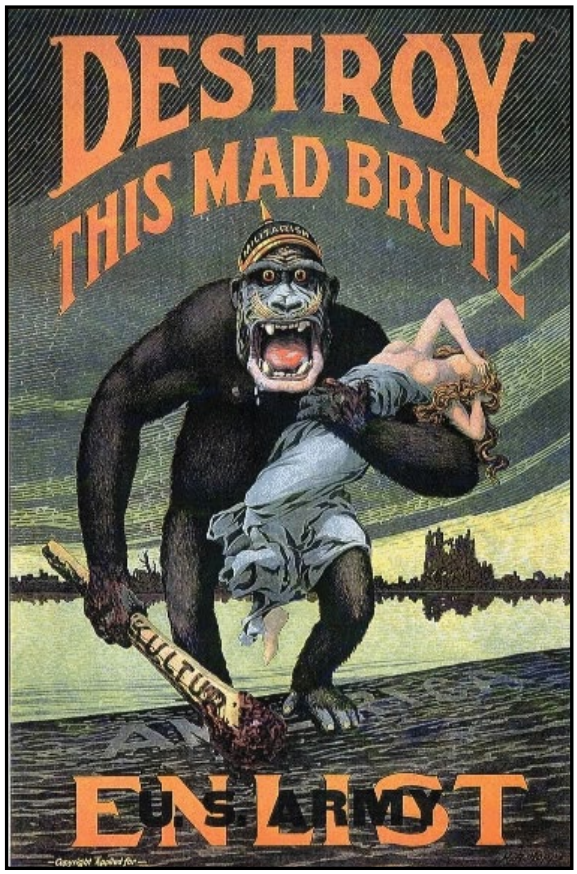


Figure 2.1

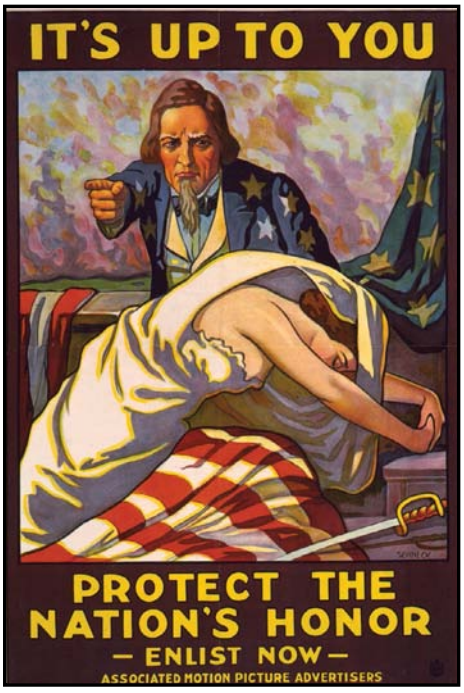


Figure 2.2

Figure, 2.3

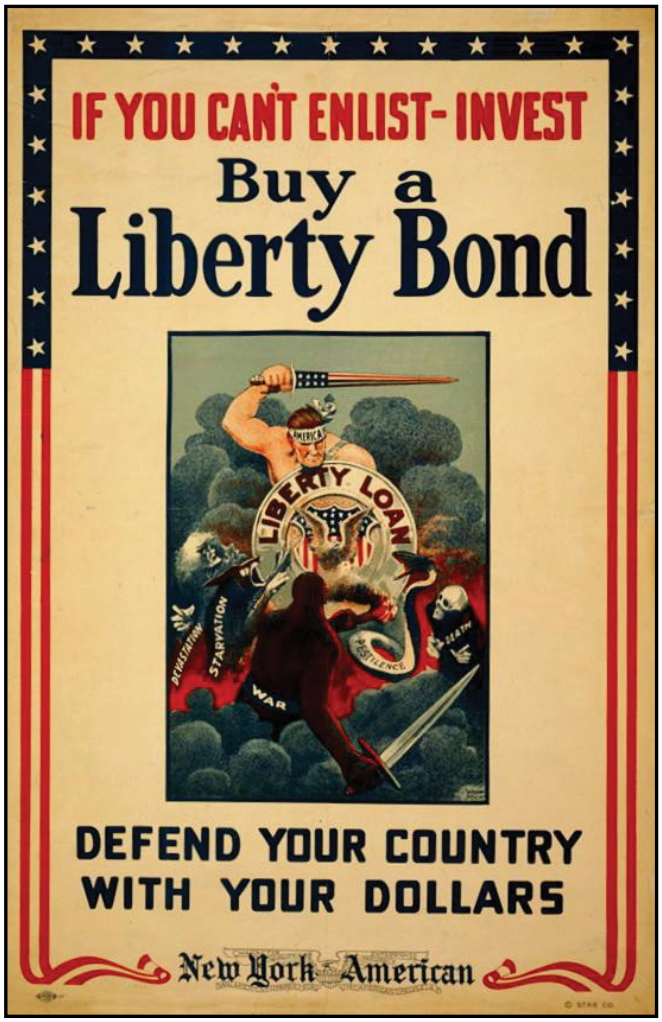


Figure 2.4

Figure 2.5

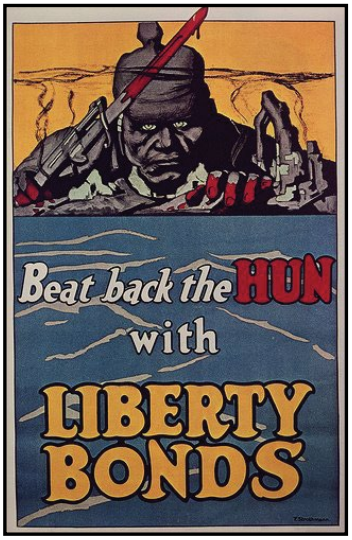


Figure 2.6

support for the war. Don't tell us that our children are in danger; show us German soldiers (The Hun) herding our children with bayonets. Don't tell us our women are at risk, show us a gorilla dressed as a German soldier carrying the "flower of our womanhood" off to his lair. To finance the war, the government borrowed from its citizens under the clever name of Liberty Bonds, with the Statue of Liberty standing tall. Consider the brilliant manipulation in the poster, "What did you do in the war, Daddy?" Visuals are visceral. By comparison, words are meek.

The techniques seem so comically obvious to us now, but to Americans of that era such powerful imagery was new—and very motivating. One million American soldiers fought in Europe and tipped the war in favor of the Allies, defeating Germany and Austro-Hungry. In the process, Barton and his colleagues had created a new discipline that was based on visual manipulation of our most basic emotional sensibilities. Today, we call this *brand advertising*.

As Zeitz recounts, now it is 1919 and the war is won. The manipulators had succeeded wildly in winning the public's support. And now they are out of work. What to do? Well, why not take all of those manipulative techniques learned during the selling of the war and use them to sell brands? Just as Barton and his associates had once sold their services to the U.S. government, now they would sell them to U.S. corporations. A new era was emerging—the age of modern American consumerism. Using the techniques they had learned during the war, the ad pioneers would lead the charge via the full-service ad agency.

Advertising agencies before World War I were media brokers, bringing together the sellers of media (newspapers and magazines) and buyers of media (corporations and their brands). After World War I, they evolved into much more than that. Using the manipulative techniques their founders learned during the war, they began to also create the ads they were placing in the media. The visceral and primal fears Barton and his associates stoked during World War I they now stoked to sell consumers on brands after the war. Just as visceral and visual manipulation was essential in selling the war, it was equally essential in selling brands, most of which consumers didn't need, didn't want, and were usually bad for them. After all, if that wasn't the case, there'd be no need for the manipulators.

Before the early 1900s, the United States was a God-fearing, penny-pinching primarily rural, small-town, farming society. After the war, all of that gradually changed into the America we know today—secular, debt-ridden, urban, city-centric, industrial, and, now, digital.

Around this same time, 1919, America's largest companies began to discover the power of branding. For example, General Mills quickly discovered that Cheerios was a surer way to profits than selling generic grains at commodity prices. General Mills, Procter & Gamble, Quaker Oats, and many other companies realized that a brand that had a name, face, and personality created customer loyalty, preference, and—yes, yes, yes—love! Consumers assumed that these new brands differed from their generic counterparts and, most important, were better. So they felt it was only logical that they should pay more money for them. Now the foundation was laid. As you have already learned, brands and brand advertising are connected at the hip. You can't have one without the other. The companies created their brands, and now it was up to Barton and other ad pioneers to create the personalities that would bring those brands to life. They would do it with the same techniques they used to create demand for World War I. They would do it with

visual appeals that played on consumers' most primal emotional sensibilities. Then, they would distribute those appeals nationwide via national magazines—the new form of communication, mass communication.

The American public was ready. The war had shaken America out of its nineteenth-century slumber and thrust it into the twentieth century. The migration from the farms and small towns had begun. The cities were the places to be! Young people who left home left behind many of their parents' values. Thrift gave way to consumption. Church gave way to cocktails. Increasingly, Americans looked for happiness in brands that promised everything from beauty to sex appeal to comfort to sophistication to, well, everything. They were tired of war, rural life, and the deprivation of their morally charged, Spartan lives. They were ready to party! And the Jazz Age was born, fueled by illegal alcohol, a new moral code, and, most important, a new freedom and attitude among women. Women, most of all, would be the target of the manipulators. They had always been the primary buyers for the family, but now they would be sold new and alluring products made just for them. Brands that promised to make them prettier, more stylish, and freer than ever before.

As Zeitz explains in *Flapper*, ad pioneers such as Barton knew how to fuel the fire. They learned during the war not to sell the product (in this case the war), but the *benefit* that would result from the product (America's continued liberty). So if the benefit of buying the war was the continuation of our liberty, the benefit of buying Quaker Oats was robust good health. The benefit of owning a new automobile was not the car, but the beautiful woman standing next to it, who now would surely be attainable. Zeitz quotes Barton who summed up the manipulation perfectly: "Without imagination, no wants."[1] Barton and the other manipulators urged consumers to forget saving and start spending. Consuming was the new religion. And Jesus, according to Barton's famous book of the times, *The Man Nobody Knows*, would heartily agree.[2] After all, wasn't Jesus the ultimate salesman? The manipulators set out to convince consumers that what Jesus wanted was for them to consume, consume, consume. And if they did, they would be happier, sexier, richer, more loved, more admired—joyful! No need to wait for heaven, now they could have heaven on earth and, better yet, Jesus approved.

In shifting their focus from selling the war to selling brands, the advertising pioneers went back to the one primal emotion that had served them so well—fear . During World War I, they stirred up fear among Americans that Germany threatened their very liberty. In selling brands, they stirred up a different kind of fear among Americans—that they just weren't acceptable as they were. They needed improving. They were too fat, too thin, too young, too old, too poor, too unattractive, too unsophisticated. But the good news was that they could overcome all their shortcomings if they would only—consume.

Zeitz highlights two early campaigns that made brilliant use of this most primal of all emotions—fear. One of the first fears they planted in consumers' minds was the fear they might have halitosis. At the time, consumers had never heard of halitosis. Maybe you haven't either. It's a fancy word for bad breath. The reason halitosis offered such rich possibilities was because we can't smell our own bad breath. So they played on consumers' insecurity that they had bad breath and didn't even know it. What to do? Well, one of the hallmarks of brand advertising is that once

you create a problem (in this case halitosis) then you immediately solve it—with your brand. The brand here was Listerine. Listerine had been available for many years and used as a topical germ killer for disinfecting sinks, tables, bathrooms, etc. Then someone had the great idea to broaden Listerine's skill set by advertising that it could also kill the germs that "lurked" in your mouth and caused the bad breath. That simple adjustment of its brand promise—from killing germs *outside* your mouth to killing them *inside* your mouth—created a billion-dollar revenue stream that's still flowing today. Some of the first magazine ads for Listerine used emotionally charged visuals to plant the fear that all of us had halitosis. One ad showed an attractive, elegantly attired man trying to kiss a woman, but she had turned away. Halitosis strikes again! But don't fear. Listerine is here. If you gargled twice a day with Listerine, you'd be assured that your bad breath would never turn anyone away. So the manipulators transformed Listerine from an inanimate product into a facilitator of social, romantic, and business success—Listerine's brand promise or benefit to the consumer.

Much of the early brand advertising employed similar techniques—set up a problem and have your brand solve it. It was done again for Ban deodorant. Zeitz explains that in the early years of the 1900s, everyone smelled. The shower had not been devised. Baths were cumbersome and time consuming, and next to no one bathed daily or even weekly. So breathing in body odor was as much a fact of life as breathing itself. Then the manipulators went to work. The first deodorants merely masked odor with a fragrance. Bathing everyday with soap would have worked much better, but, as I said, it was too time consuming. So they took the easy route and offered a simple and easy way to beat body odor—putting deodorant under the arms. Certainly the underarms produce much sweat, but so does the entire body. Nothing could be done easily to solve that, so the underarms were singled out, and Ban deodorant was born. The manipulators created a boogeyman with halitosis that Listerine could slay. Now, they created another boogeyman—body odor—for Ban to slay. Presto! Fear creates another multi-million-dollar revenue stream.

Figure 2.7

Marketers, and the manipulators they employ, have a powerful vested interest in making consumers feel bad about themselves Why? Because as long as consumers feel bad about themselves they will continue to buy brands that promise to make them feel good about themselves—easily, cheaply, quickly.

Romance FOLLOWS FRESH LOVELINESS . . .
Men just can't stand a girl who's careless about personal freshness. Ban-O-Dor makes you sure of always being sweet and fresh. A touch applied like a lipstick, under your arms, when dressing or during daygivesy can be long fra Famous
In atisk at any Dr.
cont oy foot expert.
BAN-O-DOR ONIXOL

Figure 2.8

The path to being slimmer, sexier, smarter, or younger is always clear—buy something. And we love it. Yes, consumers are not innocents here. This manipulation works because we want the easy, inexpensive quick answers. It's too painful to accept that we lack romance in our lives because we're selfish. That would take a lot of work and time to change. It's much easier to just attribute the defect to bad breath and body odor. Those are things we can solve quickly and easily. Consumers' insecurities are at the core of nearly every brand's appeal. Think of cosmetics. In the early 1900s, only actresses and prostitutes wore makeup. Thanks to the manipulators, that began to change in the early 1920s. Today, how many women dare to go out without first putting on their "faces"? I've done polls among the women in my classes and the answer is always the same—next to none. Such a telling word—their "face"—the face they present to the world. Why do they do it? Because years of cosmetics advertising has made them fear that the real them is too unattractive, too unlovable, too undesirable without their "face."

Listerine and Ban are just two early examples of the incredible one-two punch of branding and brand advertising. They desperately need each other to succeed. They are flip sides of the same coin. They are connected at the hip. And a key ingredient in all brand advertising is manipulation. Those who do best in advertising embrace and enjoy its inherently manipulative goals. If manipulating consumers on a mass scale makes you feel "dirty," then advertising is not for you. As I wrote earlier, most of the advertised brands we don't need, don't want, and aren't good for us. Therefore, manipulation of our minds, and most of all our hearts, is an essential element of all great advertising. If manipulation has no place in your heart, then advertising has no place in your life.

How do you become one of these manipulators? Read on.

NOTES

1. Joshua Zeitz, *Flapper* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2006), 177.
2. Zeitz, *Flapper*, 174, 182–183, 197–199, 201–205.

Chapter Three

Advertising Strategic Theory: Book Two of the Advertising Bible

All marketing communications, of which advertising is just one type, are done to a strategy. That's the reason TV commercials, print ads, outdoor billboards, banner ads, etc. are called **executions**. They execute the strategy. If I'm going to write a book entitled *The Art of Manipulation, aka Advertising Copywriting*, I have to start with the strategy because that's where the manipulation starts. Then, as its very name defines it, the execution extends the manipulation to the actual ads.

The strategy is often a collaborative process that includes the client, as well as the agency's account planners, account managers, and creative directors. Every full-service agency includes the following functions or disciplines: account planning/research, account management, creative, and media planning. Media planning is the actual process of buying time on TV, radio, and the Internet, as well as buying space in magazines, newspapers, and websites.

Don't confuse the account planner with the account manager. The account manager's primary role is to liaison with the client and act as the "hub of the wheel" for his or her account at the agency. As the hub of the wheel, all of the agency's personnel on that account revolve around that account manager as she or he leads the team. Everyone on the team is working with the account manager, but not necessarily *for* the account manager.

The account planner's primary role is to act as the bridge between the research department at the agency and the creative group handling the account. The account planner takes the relevant research done by the agency, client, and others on the product category (e.g., toothpaste), as well as that on the brand (e.g., Crest), and then analyzes it, interprets it, and comes up with a strategic approach that meets the marketing-communications objective. The culmination of this account planning process is a document called the **creative brief**. The creative brief gives the creative group its marching orders. The brief gives the creative group guidelines that they must adhere to in their executions of the strategy. Otherwise, the executions (the actual advertising) are in the hands of the creatives. Once the account planner passes off the project to the creatives, they now are in charge of infusing life into that strategy. Until then, the strategy

is like Dr. Frankenstein's famous monster—dead. It needs to be jolted into life by electrifying creativity; creativity that employs humor, pathos, drama, shock, special effects, and anything else that's necessary. It's the creative execution that enables consumers to relate to a brand as if it were a person. Remember, it's best to think of brands as people. The more you think of brands as people, the better chance you have at persuading and manipulating your target market.

STRATEGIC THEORY #1: USP

USP stands for *unique selling proposition*. Rosser Reeves set down the theory in his landmark 1961 book, *Reality in Advertising*. Reeves is one of the big thinkers of the advertising business, and USP forms the core of this thinking. If you're serious about a career in advertising, I recommend that you read this book and reread it every year. It was out of print, but thankfully it's now available in a new edition.

Reeves would say that if a brand does not have a USP in its product category (remember that a product category is something like toothpaste, whereas the brand in that category is Crest), then it has no business being on the market. The reason he is so adamant on this point is because all great advertising answers the question every consumer is asking when he or she sees any kind of ad—"What's in it for me?" Almost 99.9 percent of the time the answer is "nothing," and the consumer turns the page, switches the channel, or continues surfing the Web. When a brand has a USP, the USP answers that question. And when that USP has a compelling benefit to the consumer to whom it is targeted, then those consumers see it clearly and will move on it; that is, they will buy the brand in question. This is crucially important because it puts advertising in its place. Here's what I mean by that: what advertising does best is create awareness. Given the correct amount of media spending, we know for sure that we can make consumers aware of a brand's USP. Once we have done that, advertising's role is over and now it's up to the USP to do the rest of the selling. Based on the assumption that consumers inherently know what's best for them, Reeves felt that once a USP was advertised with the proper amount of frequency, then consumers would buy.

Let's take a simple example: Bill's Cancer Pill. Bill's Cancer Pill will cure cancer if you have it and prevent cancer if you don't. Do I need to persuade anyone to buy this pill? Of course not. All I have to do is to make consumers *aware* of it and they will come. Why? Because the benefit of Bill's Cancer Pill is so compelling and unique that it sells itself. Bill's Cancer Pill is about as good as it gets. It doesn't exist and probably never will. But it gives you a good example of what Reeves was striving for when he insisted that every brand have a USP. Brands that have benefits that are indisputable sell themselves and, therefore, advertising (and all other forms of marketing communications) can play its correct role—one of awareness. Not persuasion. Not entertainment. Not manipulation. Do I need to manipulate everyone to buy Bill's Cancer Pill? Of course not. Consumers will be beating down my door to get it. And that's exactly where you want to be with your brand.

Unfortunately, Bill's Cancer Pill is the ideal, not the norm. The farther away we get from that kind of compelling USP, the less chance our brand has of selling. Today, brands with weak or nonexistent USPs are the rule. Nonetheless, there are exceptions, and we can learn a lot about the USP from them. Here are three: iPod, iPhone, and iPad.

All three, at the time of their introductions, had compelling USPs: they had unique qualities that no other brands in those categories could match. Think back to the advertising for those brands, particularly the first iPhone. The TV commercial was a simple demonstration of all of iPhone's unique qualities. Apple did the same thing with the iPad a few years later. To refresh your memory, find these introductory commercials online. There was no need to convince, persuade, or manipulate anyone to buy the iPhone or iPad because their USPs were so unique and compelling that the brands sold themselves. Consumers saw the advantages of these brands and they moved on it. But before the iPhone and the iPad there was the iPod. Before its introduction, Sony's Walkman was the king of portable music. But the Walkman had a crucial weakness. Before the music files on your desktop computer could become portable, you had to transfer them to a disk, burn the disk, and then put that disk into the Walkman. The iPod eliminated all those steps. With an iPod, consumers could take their music files, load them directly onto their iPods (which are really nothing more than small music computers), and go. Now there is a USP. Reeves would be thrilled. With the iPod, iPhone, and iPad, Apple's traditional computers are almost an afterthought! And what about the Walkman? Well, you know the answer. It's dead. And so is Sony in the portable-music category. Even today, over 10 years later, iPod "owns" the portable music market with about 79 percent market share. It's a dramatic example of how a compelling USP can turn a brand into a super brand. Compelling USPs turn product categories upside down and change them forever.

The trouble is few brands have such powerful USPs. So, Reeves quickly realized that if he followed his own advice and advertised only brands with unique selling propositions, he'd soon be unemployed and his agency, Ted Bates, would be out of business. So what to do? Pivot. Because Reeves knew that few brands had any unique differentiation in their categories, he came up with a modified USP theory. This would be far more useable in the real world, where the brands in most product categories are pretty much the same. This is called **brand parity**—consumers can see no difference from brand to brand in most product categories.

For a brand to succeed in this real world, Reeves held that where no uniqueness can be found for a brand, then the brand should *wrap itself in uniquness*.[1] How? By choosing one key benefit of the brand and advertising that benefit *as if it were unique to the brand*, even though it is not. The perfect example of this strategic theory is one of Reeves' own campaigns for Wonder Bread. Wonder Bread is a regional brand of sliced white bread. Reeves' campaign chose "builds strong bodies 8 ways" as Wonder Bread's key benefit. Well, *all* brands of white bread build strong bodies 8 ways. But by relentlessly advertising this benefit for Wonder Bread and putting millions of dollars in media behind this message, soon consumers believed that *only* Wonder Bread builds strong bodies 8 ways. So the benefit is not unique to the brand, but it is unique to the category in the sense that no other brand is making that specific claim in that specific category. So why can't the other brands of white bread just make the same claim? They could, but that claim is so

closely tied to Wonder Bread that any other brand that makes the same claim will only serve to remind the consumer of Wonder Bread, and sell lots more of it. This key pivot in Reeves' USP strategy has become one of the hallmarks of modern advertising and one of its most manipulative techniques. It might seem illegal, but it's not. We have said nothing untrue about our brand, and we are not obligated legally to point out that all brands in the category do the same thing. Ethically, perhaps, we should. But modern advertising at its very core is not ethical. It uses manipulative techniques like this to create the *illusion* of differentiation where none exists. That is inherently unethical, but not illegal. As I said in other parts of the book, if this bothers you, then advertising is not for you.

Because most of the benefits or claims made for brands will be of this kind, the advertiser must make sure that the benefit or claim that is chosen has real meaning for the consumers in that target market. And that requirement is the third and last criterion in Reeves' USP strategic theory: the benefit or claim needs to be able to move millions. If it doesn't move millions, then we don't have a business model. We have made a claim that is not important to enough consumers and, therefore, will not move enough product to make the brand a success.

So to recap, here are the three criteria of Reeves' USP strategic theory that he feels must be part of every advertising campaign:[2]

1. The advertising must make a proposition (a claim or benefit promise or brand promise) to the consumers who are interested in buying a brand in that particular product category.
2. The proposition needs to be unique to the brand (once again think of Bill's Cancer Pill, iPod, iPhone, iPad).

2a. If the brand is not unique in any way, then we need to choose a proposition (benefit or claim) for the brand and advertise that claim *as if it is unique*. This is Reeves' pivot as described above in the Wonder Bread example, and what happens most of the time. There was no "2a" on Reeves' original list, but I put it here because I think it brings home the point I've made above.

3. The proposition (benefit or claim) that we make for the brand must be powerful and compelling enough to move millions.

Reeves had been applying the USP theory for nearly 20 years when he wrote *Reality in Advertising*. He put his USP theory on paper in response to the advertising that was beginning to be practiced in the early 1960s. Reeves abhorred it. He didn't even regard it as advertising, but termed it in his book as "window dressing"—presenting a brand to the consumer without being clear as to how that brand would benefit the consumer. What Reeves abhorred was what many in advertising celebrated and called the "creative revolution." This approach to advertising is most often credited to Bill Bernbach and the agency he cofounded in the early 1960s called Doyle Dane Bernbach.

Ironically, one of the reasons ad agencies began moving away from Reeves' USP theory had to do with criterion number three of his own theory—the proposition must move millions. As the 1950s drew to a close, it was becoming harder and harder to make brand claims within product

categories that met this criterion. In other words, there were no claims left within most product categories that had "the power to move millions." And, by Reeves' own admission, that was a deal breaker. Parity within the product categories had gotten so prevalent that Reeves' USP seldom worked. And that eventually gave rise to the second advertising strategic theory—positioning.

STRATEGIC THEORY #2: POSITIONING

Let's start with a story. Daniel Boone is making his way through the backwoods in about 1780, as he has done so many trailblazing days before. This day, however, he comes upon Interstate 80. He's amazed. He rushes back home to tell Mrs. Boone all about what he has seen. How does he describe this amazing new wonder? He describes what he doesn't understand (Interstate 80) in terms of things that he does understand. So if I'm Daniel Boone, here's how the conversation with my wife might go: "Mrs. Boone, I have seen a *trail* unlike any I have ever seen before. It was straight as an *arrow* and went all the way to the horizon. It was black like dirt, but when I got close and touched it, it was as hard as *rock*. And more amazing still, there were *horseless carriages* racing along this trail so fast that I could not keep them in my eyesight." Notice the words I highlighted. They illustrate my point that all of us describe things we aren't familiar with and don't understand with terms that we *are* familiar with and *do* understand. That is the whole ideas behind positioning. In order to make consumers understand brands they *don't* know, we have to talk about them in relationship to the brands they *do* know.

If USP is all about a brand's attributes in reality, then positioning is all about how we perceive a brand in our minds. The brand's position in our minds is how it stacks up against the other brands in that particular category. There's a pecking order of brands in our minds for each product category.

Positioning was being practiced as early as the mid-1960s, long before Reis and Trout wrote their landmark articles about positioning in *Ad Age* in the early 1970s, followed by their book, *Positioning: The Battle For Your Mind,* in 1980. So, as so often happens in advertising, agencies first came to positioning instinctively. That's the kind of business this is—intuitive; experiential; "gut," not head.

Positioning is most effective in product categories in which there is one dominant brand, so dominant that the brand becomes synonymous with that category. In terms of market share (the percentage share of brands in each product category) the dominant brand often has as much as 70 percent of the sales in that category. These "800-pound-gorilla"[3] brands almost invariably *created* the product categories they dominate, what Reis and Trout cleverly called "the firstest with the mostest."[4] But however important it is to *be* first, it is equally important to *stay* first in consumers' minds. And a brand can only achieve that by continuing to offer consumers "the mostest." So that is the challenge of the dominant brand—stay first with continual brand improvements or subbrands. Good examples of dominant brands in their categories include Starbucks (café coffee), iPod (MP3 players), and Bayer (aspirin). But where does that leave the followers in the category—the number two and number three brands? The answer is: nowhere,

because when consumers think of that product category they think only of the original and dominant brand. So, the only way to get into the consumer's mind in that particular category is to talk about the follower brand in terms of the dominant brand, in effect, doing what Daniel Boone did in describing something he didn't know in terms he did. If you are a follower brand in a category with a dominant leader, then the only thing consumers want to know is what are you going to give them that the dominant brand can't or won't.

The first positioning campaign that garnered attention was the Avis "We're #2" campaign.[5] I mentioned above that positioning is all about a brand's pecking order in our minds. The Avis campaign perfectly illustrates this principle. It also perfectly illustrates the kind of product category in which positioning a follower is the most effective. Reis and Trout write that at the time Hertz dominated the rental car category and Avis was a distant second. No matter how good Avis was, it could not get into the consumer's mind until it first recognized the leader—Hertz. The "We're #2" campaign did this cleverly and memorably. No advertiser had ever voluntarily admitted to being number two. But Avis did because the agency understood that all anyone knew of rental cars was Hertz, and if they didn't acknowledge that nobody would hear them. But "We're #2" was only the first of the two punches. The second punch was "But we try harder." As I pointed out above, this is classic positioning strategy for the follower: first recognize the dominance of the leader, then tell consumers what your brand is going to give them or do for them that the leader doesn't or won't (Figure 3.1).

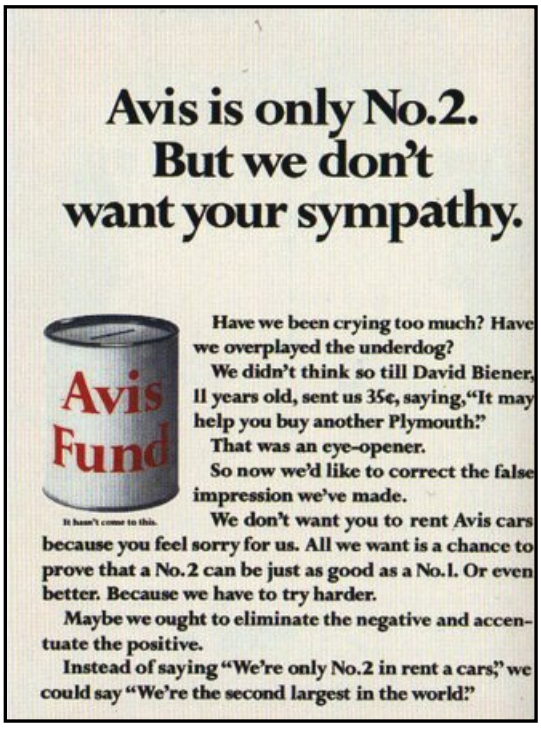

Avis is only No.2.
But we don't
want your sympathy.
Avis
Fund
It hasn't come to this.
Have we been crying too much? Have we overplayed the underdog?
We didn't think so till David Biener, 11 years old, sent us 35¢, saying, "It may help you buy another Plymouth."
That was an eye-opener.
So now we'd like to correct the false impression we've made.
We don't want you to rent Avis cars because you feel sorry for us. All we want is a chance to prove that a No. 2 can be just as good as a No. 1. Or even better. Because we have to try harder.
Maybe we ought to eliminate the negative and accentuate the positive.
Instead of saying "We're only No. 2 in rent a cars," we could say "We're the second largest in the world."

Figure 3.1

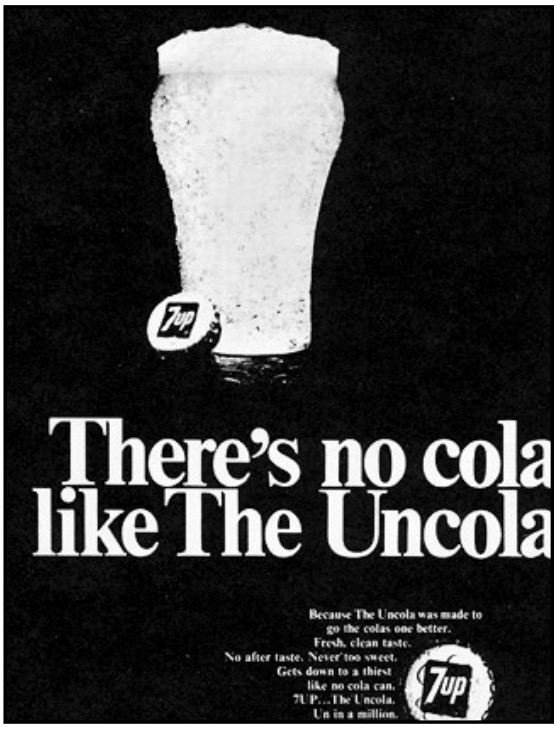

7up
There's no cola
like The Uncola
Because The Uncola was made to go the colas one better.
Fresh, clean taste.
No after taste. Never too sweet.
Gets down to a thirst like no cola can.
7UP...The Uncola.
Un in a million.
7up

Figure 3.2

Along with Avis, the other classic positioning campaign is the 7-UP Uncola campaign. I joined J. Walter Thompson/Chicago in 1972 when the campaign was still going strong and I knew and worked with many of the people who created the campaign. I presented a paper on the subject at the 2006 AEJMC Conference in San Francisco and I did a documentary about the campaign that is available on DVD from Insight Media in New York. You can order it online if you're interested in exploring this very clever campaign in more detail.

In 1967, the soft-drink category was dominated by the colas—Coke and Pepsi. This is a time before sports drinks (Gatorade), bottled waters, vitamin waters, organic green teas, etc., etc. The beverage category was very narrow—colas, root beers, and fruit-based soft drinks—and all were carbonated. Among the fruit-based soft drinks, 7-UP was the dominate lemon-lime brand. But, because it wasn't a cola, it was perceived in consumers' minds as a medicinal for an upset stomach or as a mixer with whiskey. 7-UP was not positioned in consumers' minds as a soft drink because it wasn't a cola, and research among the teenage target market confirmed that perception. When teens were asked to name the top seven or so soft drinks, all were colas. So, here, instead of one brand being dominant, as was the case with Hertz, a subcategory was dominant, the colas (Coke, Pepsi, and Royal Crown). After much thought and discussion, the client and the creative group at JWT realized that until they aligned themselves with the colas consumers would never think of 7-UP as a soft drink. And that, in turn, would continue to dramatically limit sales.

Three of the key people were in the room when the word "Uncola" was first uttered were the client (Orville Roesch), the creative director (Bill Ross), and a young writer (Charlie Martell). Orville knew they somehow had to align themselves with the colas, and Bill Ross suggested calling 7-UP the "non-cola." Everyone thought that was interesting, and then Charlie followed that up with a slight variation—"Uncola." Once again, everyone thought they were on to something, but decided to think it over. As Charlie tells the story in my documentary, after a few days everyone realized that they really had something with the "Uncola." It tied 7-UP to the colas, yet in the very same word told consumers that it was different. Three very simple commercials were done that introduced "Uncola" and always talked about 7-UP in relationship to the colas. Once again, just as Avis had to first recognize Hertz in order for consumers to open their minds to Avis, so, too, 7-UP had to recognize colas in order for consumers to open their minds to 7-UP. Within the first year of the campaign, sales increased dramatically. Yet nothing changed about 7-UP, not the bottle, nor the beverage inside. What changed was how consumers *perceived* 7-UP in their minds—not as a medicinal or mixer, but finally as a soft drink (Figure 3.2).

But what about categories in which there is no one dominant brand? The toothpaste category, for example, has two brands of equal strength—Crest and Colgate—and one significant other brand—Arm & Hammer. In categories like this, do we have an opportunity to use positioning? Well, not in the traditional sense that we have already described. But when we are faced with a brand for which we cannot make any USP claim that would "move millions," then we have to try one more thing before we move on to emotional appeals—the last card that we have to play. There is a kind of "2a" in positioning just as there was in Reeves' USP theory. In the "2a" version of positioning, our brand is not the 800-pound gorilla, and it's not a follower. Our brand has

equal market share in the category with one or more of the others. So how do you position? Well, since you're not the "firstest with the mostest" and you're not a follower, but an equal, you define your brand by positioning it in terms of something *outside* the category.

Here's an example. The full-calorie beer category in the early 1970s had three fairly equal brands. Although Bud was the market leader, Miller High Life and Coors had significant market share, and Pabst, Old Style, Hamms, Schultz, and a few others were players. By the early 1970s, the significant brand-attribute claims in the category had already been made and worn out. Consumers didn't believe them anymore, and even if they did they didn't care. They were claims that did not "move millions." But the category had no easy foil as 7-UP had with the colas and Avis had with Hertz. If we had a brand in the full-calorie beer category, how could we use positioning to make it stand out from the crowd? The answer was a landmark campaign that is still being used off and on today—Miller Time. Here, Miller High Life is defining itself not as the leader and not in terms of any other brand that is the leader, but rather in terms of the time of day when it's best to drink a Miller High Life—Miller Time. It was a strategy targeted to the heavy beer user—blue-collar, working-class men. Unlike white-collar workers, these men work from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. They are due home at 5 p.m. for family time, but before that, it's Miller Time—that two-hour time period between work and family when men gather and unwind with a beer or two. The genius of this campaign is that Miller grabbed the part of the day when their target market was most likely to drink beer and now *owned it* (Figure 3.3).

You can still see the commercials on YouTube, and I highly recommend you watch them. It's not only a great campaign in terms of strategy, but also in terms of execution. All of the commercials start with working-class men engaged in their jobs—construction, railroading, oil drilling, etc. And, as the commercials say so well, "When the day is done, it's Miller Time."

Figure 3.3

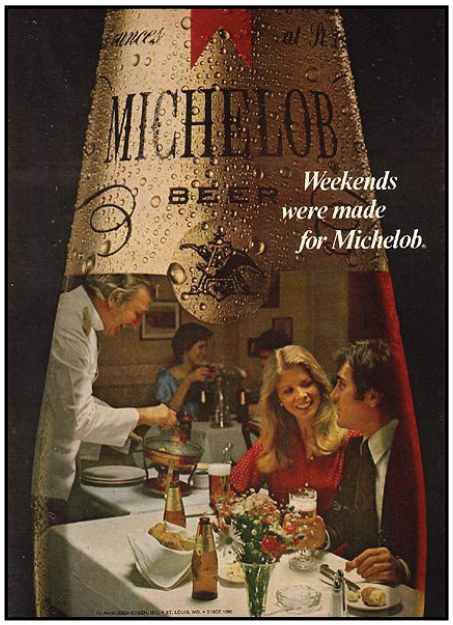


Figure 3.4

The men go off to their favorite bars and relax together over a couple of beers—Miller High Life beers. What claims are made for Miller High Life in these commercials? None. Nothing is said about the beer itself because, as I said, by this time nothing *can* be said about the beer that would "move millions." The campaign is simply portioning off a time of day for itself at the expense of the other brands in the category—most notably Bud and Coors. Not to be outdone, soon after Miller Time, Michelob began a campaign that was very similar—"The nights were made for Michelob." Michelob was designed as Anheuser-Busch's "import-killer," a premium beer (meaning higher priced, of course) over its own Budweiser or Miller High Life. The campaign was targeting a different beer drinker, but with a similar "day-part" appeal. Miller High Life already had the 3 to 5 p.m. time period. Now Michelob was laying claim to the nights (Figure 3.4). The logic being this: at night, when a beer drinker *really* has time to relax and appreciate a truly stellar beer, that time is reserved for something special—Michelob. Later, Michelob extended the campaign to include weekends, which they must have determined had even more potential to increase sales. As with Miller Time, these campaigns for Michelob make no brand claims. They take a chunk of our day or week and stake claim to it. In a very real sense they are staking that claim where? In our minds.

Another example of this "2a" use of positioning is much more recent. Yoplait has a low-fat and no-fat line of yogurts with names that conjure up classic high-fat, high-calorie desserts—strawberry cheesecake, key lime pie, etc. What this campaign is doing is talking about Yoplait in terms of the desserts that consumers already recognize as being the "gold standards" of deliciousness. So Yoplait is allowing consumers to do what they love most—have their cake and eat it too. No pun intended. Now the target market—mature women—can have all the pleasure of their favorite desserts, but at a fraction of the calories. In effect, Yoplait has hijacked these famous, delicious desserts and has taken their deliciousness and rubbed it off on the Yoplait low-fat/no-fat brands.

Along similar lines, I did a campaign for Van Camp's pork and beans that eventually won a Certificate of Merit from *Communications Arts* magazine. The assignment came into the agency as a simple two-ad campaign to show the variety of foods that Van Camp's went well with, not just hot dogs. I knew this was going to be my one and only campaign for Van Camp's and I really wanted to do something much more innovative. I went back to the primary research that had been done by Stokely Van-Camp and found that our target market of moms with two or three children didn't serve Van Camp's more often because they pretty much considered it junk food in a can. Once I read that, I knew I was on to something. What if we could overcome that objection and show our target market just how nutritious Van Camp's pork 'n beans actually was. I did some quick research and found some nutritional facts that were very impressive. It turned out that Van Camp's pork 'n beans compared very favorably to foods that our target market already recognized as nutritious—asparagus, steak, and cottage cheese. When my art director partner, Sal Sinare, and I got together, I told him about this strategy and convinced him to do a nutritional campaign in addition to the varietal ads the client wanted.

The question was how do we take this strategy and bring it to life in the executions? We needed a visual way to align Van Camp's pork 'n beans with the foods that moms already recognized as being nutritious. We both agreed that having the Van Camp's can in the ad

was deadly. Then I had the "aha!" moment. I said what if we lost the actual can and just used the best part of it—the label—and then wrap that label around the foods consumers already recognized as being nutritious. Visually, we were "wrapping our arms" around the foods moms already recognized as being nutritious and *mentally* aligning ourselves with them. Just as with the Yoplait example, we were taking the gold standard and comparing ourselves favorably to it.

Remember how I started this positioning section—with the Daniel Boone story. That's what's going on here. We're describing something consumers didn't know (Van Camp's high nutritional value) with something they *did* know—the high nutritional value of asparagus, steak, and cottage cheese. At that point, Sal jumped in and said, "You don't know beans." Now we had the whole campaign. I took that cliché and refined it into headlines that addressed the actual foods and nutrition. The campaign was done in an hour. That's how a copywriter and art director should work together—as a team. I wasn't a writer waiting for Sal to come up with the visual. And he wasn't an art director waiting for me to come up with the headline. We were just two creatives going at it. Now that we had the concept worked out, Sal went off and did the three layouts and I went off to fine-tune the headlines and write the body copy. Plus, I had one other defining idea. I decided it would look really "official" if I included a chart that compared the nutritional value of Van Camp's to the other foods. Pure manipulation. I knew that if the information was presented in a chart it would have far more credibility with consumers than if it was presented in the body copy. In addition, if they were reading the asparagus ad, they could look at the chart and also see how well it compared to steak and cottage cheese. So the chart was doing double-duty in that sense.

Our executive creative director never thought a campaign this audacious would ever go anywhere. But the reverse was true. We presented the two varietal ads to the group brand manager, but then we presented him with our nutritional campaign. And I still remember how his eyes lit up. He knew immediately that he had something here. This was advertising that would change forever consumers' *perception* of Van Camp's pork 'n beans. They would literally see it in a new way, just as they had seen 7-UP in a new way—not as a medicinal and mixer, but as a soft drink. Our Van Camp's campaign did exactly the same thing—it wasn't junk food in a can anymore, it actually was very nutritious "real" food. Yet *nothing* about the brand changed. Not the label. Not what was inside the can. The only thing that changed was people's *minds*. Our consumers didn't think we could tell them anything new about Van Camp's pork 'n beans. But we did. And, boy, were they interested. This is a perfect example of what we'll explore a bit later—advertising that has *news* value. Advertising that tells the consumer something *new* and *unexpected* that they didn't previously know about a brand. When we tested the campaign, it scored off the charts. It not only *looked* new, it said something new about Van Camp's. That's a one-two combination that can't be beat. As I said, the campaign went on to win several awards, the most prestigious being from *Communication Arts*, which I think most creatives would agree is the toughest to win, especially with an entire campaign rather than just one ad (Figures 3.5–3.7).

IF YOU THINK
ASPARAGUS HAS A LOT OF IRON,
YOU DON'T KNOW BEANS.
Van Camp's pork and beans are tasty. Your family can vouch for that. But if you don't know they're a good source of protein and iron and calcium, you just don't know beans.
16 OZ. (1½ SERVINGS) OF VAN CAMP'S® PORK AND BEANS CONTAINS
AS MUCH PROTEIN AS:
AS MUCH IRON AS:
AS MUCH CALCIUM AS:
4 OZ. BONELESS STRIP STEAK
OR 3 SMALL EGGS
OR 16 FLUID OZ. MILK
26 OZ. FRESH ASPARAGUS
OR 13 OZ. T-BONE STEAK
OR 8.3 OZ. FRESH SPINACH
7.5 FLUID OZ. COTTAGE CHEESE
OR 5.5 FLUID OZ. MILK
OR 5.4 FLUID OZ. YOGURT
Check the chart. You'll see how Van Camp's® pork and beans compare to your favorite foods. No wonder Van Camp's® pork and beans are number one in the whole U.S.A.
Van Camp's
PORK AND
BEANS
NET WT 16 OZ. (1 LB) 454 g

Figure 3.5

IF YOU THINK
STEAK HAS A LOT OF PROTEIN,
YOU DON'T KNOW BEANS.
Van Camp's pork and beans are tasty. Your family can vouch for that. But if you don't know they're a good source of protein and iron and calcium, you just don't know beans.
16 OZ. (1½ SERVINGS) OF VAN CAMP'S® PORK AND BEANS CONTAINS
AS MUCH PROTEIN AS:
AS MUCH IRON AS:
AS MUCH CALCIUM AS:
4 OZ. BONELESS STRIP STEAK
OR 3 SMALL EGGS
OR 16 FLUID OZ. MILK
26 OZ. FRESH ASPARAGUS
OR 13 OZ. T-BONE STEAK
OR 8.3 OZ. FRESH SPINACH
7.5 FLUID OZ. COTTAGE CHEESE
OR 5.5 FLUID OZ. MILK
OR 5.4 FLUID OZ. YOGURT
Check the chart. You'll see how Van Camp's® pork and beans compare to your favorite foods. No wonder Van Camp's® pork and beans are number one in the whole U.S.A.
Van Camp's
PORK AND
BEANS
NET WT 16 OZ. (1 LB) 454 g

Figure 3.6

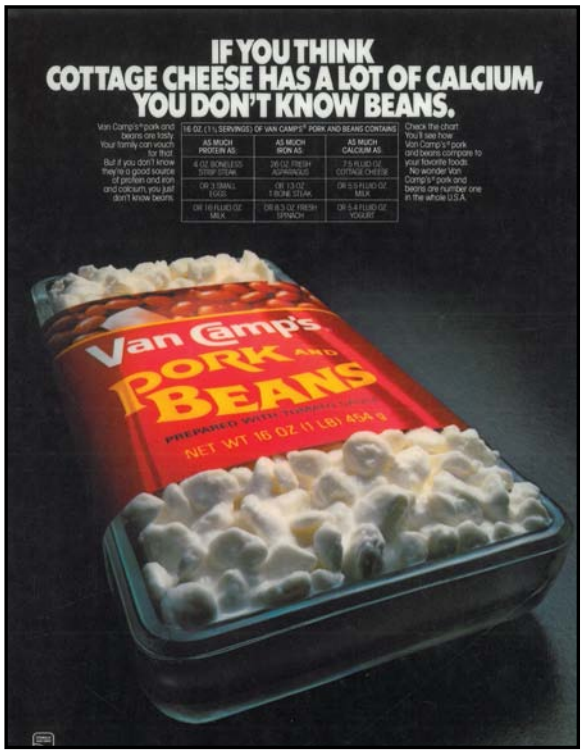

IF YOU THINK
COTTAGE CHEESE HAS A LOT OF CALCIUM,
YOU DON'T KNOW BEANS.
Van Camp's pork and beans are tasty. Your family can vouch for that. But if you don't know they're a good source of protein and iron and calcium, you just don't know beans.
16 OZ. (1½ SERVINGS) OF VAN CAMP'S® PORK AND BEANS CONTAINS
AS MUCH PROTEIN AS:
AS MUCH IRON AS:
AS MUCH CALCIUM AS:
4 OZ. BONELESS STRIP STEAK
OR 3 SMALL EGGS
OR 16 FLUID OZ. MILK
26 OZ. FRESH ASPARAGUS
OR 13 OZ. T-BONE STEAK
OR 8.3 OZ. FRESH SPINACH
7.5 FLUID OZ. COTTAGE CHEESE
OR 5.5 FLUID OZ. MILK
OR 5.4 FLUID OZ. YOGURT
Check the chart. You'll see how Van Camp's® pork and beans compare to your favorite foods. No wonder Van Camp's® pork and beans are number one in the whole U.S.A.
Van Camp's
PORK AND
BEANS
NET WT 16 OZ. (1 LB) 454 g

Figure 3.7

WORKING THE STRATEGIC CONTINUUM

If you notice, we are working our way along what I think of as a strategic continuum. We started with USP, moved along to positioning, and, finally, we'll move to emotional appeals. This is the order in which I think you should consider which strategy to employ. You should think of your movement along the continuum as an order of *strategic preference*. And here's how your strategic decision making should unfold—which strategy to employ when, where, and how.

As advertising strategists, we always want to *first* determine if our brand has a unique selling proposition—a real one—one that is unique to the brand as in Reeves' second criterion. If it has one—as iPod did, iPhone did, and iPad did—then we go with it. Why? Go back to the question every consumer is asking himself or herself upon seeing an ad—"What's in it for me?" A unique selling proposition is a clear, definitive, and powerfully compelling answer to that question. Having such a strong USP allows the advertising to do what it does best—raise awareness. Going back to Bill's Cancer Pill, we don't have to "sell" that pill, we just have to make consumers aware of it and they will rush to buy it. That's the sign of a great USP.

Without a true USP like that, we need to move down the continuum within USP to what I have termed Reeves' "2a." Is there a significant proposition/claim/promise we can make for our brand that is true of *all* brands in the category but has not been made by any of them? If the answer is yes, then it becomes our "Wonder Bread claim," and we go with it. We are right to assume that, with the proper media budget, we will be able to manipulate our consumers into believing that our brand has uniqueness in the category, when in reality it does not. Finally, we take our "2a" and evaluate it on Reeves' third criterion—will it move millions? So we may find a claim in the category that hasn't been used by another brand, *but* we find through research or test markets that the claim is not powerful enough to move millions to buy the brand. That, of course, is as big a problem as not having an original claim to make in the first place, At this point, we decide using Reeves' USP approach isn't going to work at all.

With no cards to play in USP, we move along the continuum of strategies to positioning, which is all about perception of the brand in consumers' minds, not the brand's actual attributes in reality. When we are considering positioning as a possible strategy, we first need to determine if our brand is the 800-pound gorilla in the category or one of the followers. As you learned earlier, this will dramatically affect how we position our brand in the category. As Reis and Trout point out in their book, if we were the "firstest with the mostest," then the last thing we want to do is to mention the followers. We must act as if we own the category because, in reality, we pretty much do! Furthermore, if we were first, that's a fact and it's *over*. Now we have to concentrate on *continuing* to be the "mostest." That means keeping our brand always a step ahead of the followers in the category. Once again, Apple is a perfect example of this philosophy. Take the iPhone. We're up to iPhone version 5. Just when the competition delivers the same features and benefits of the iPhone, Apple introduces a new and improved iPhone that leaps ahead again. And, if it can't do that, then it reduces the price significantly, thereby giving consumers a real reason to go with the "real thing" in the category instead of one of the "imitators." Companies that rest on the laurels of being first but forget about always being the "mostest" soon fail. Sears is a perfect example. Sears used to be Wal-Mart—the "firstest with the mostest" in discount retailing. I personally worked on the Sears account at J. Walter Thompson for

five years and everyone at Sears had that same complacent attitude: Sears was number one and always would be, and that is simply the way God intended it. Guess they forget to ask God, because now Wal-Mart is the "firstest with the mostest," and it's questionable whether Sears can even survive in its present state. That's what happens to brands that love being the "firstest" but ignore being "mostest."

If our brand is not the "firstest with the mostest," then we must be one of the followers in the product category. As such, our brand must first pay homage to this dominant leader and then define itself in terms of what it is going to give to consumers that the dominant brand can't or won't. Positioning a follower works best in categories in which there is one dominant leader and in which the follower brand is either number two or number three in the category. It's not going to be effective if your brand is a minor player in the category with a percentage or two of the category's sales. Finally, in categories in which market share is more evenly distributed among the top three brands, positioning can still be employed by anchoring it to something *outside* the category—the time of day or the weekend as in the Miller Time and Michelob examples or to the ideal as in the Yoplait and Van Camp's pork 'n beans examples.

STRATEGIC THEORY #3: EMOTIONAL BRANDING

Now we've reached the end of the line. We've taken a strategic journey through USP and positioning, and if we are not satisfied with the results, where does that leave us? It leaves us with emotional appeals. Having determined that we can't manipulate the brand in reality and we can't manipulate it in consumers' minds, we have no other choice but to manipulate it in their *hearts*. Now it's all smoke and mirrors. By moving to emotional appeals, we recognize that the attributes of our brand and the very *brand itself* are so inconsequential to consumers that there's no need to even mention the brand's attributes or even dwell on the brand at all. Our charge at this end of the continuum has nothing to do with the brand. Now it's all about the target market's consumers. We have to identify their **meaning system**—their values, attitudes, beliefs, and behavior—through new or existing research, most often qualitative research such as focus groups. Then our brand has to *reflect* their values/attitudes/beliefs/behavior *back at them* through our brand advertising, just as if we were holding up a mirror. Because there is so much parity among brands in product categories and there is so little to say about them, emotional appeals have become the most commonly used of the three advertising

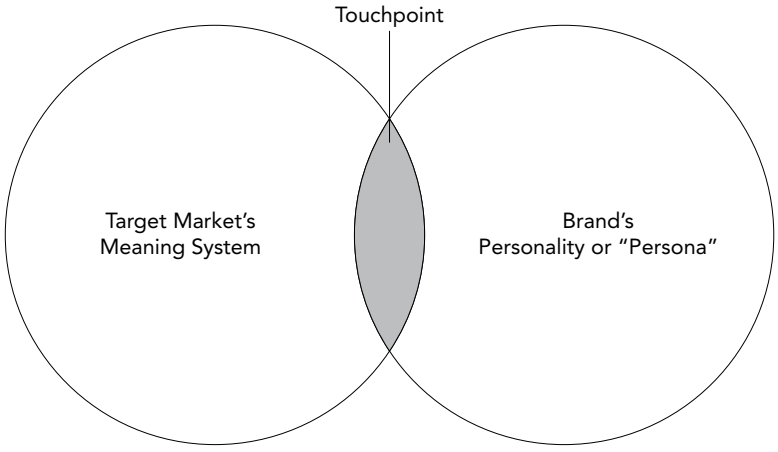


Figure 3.8

strategies. To better understand what we need to accomplish with an emotional strategy, look at the two circles in figure 3.8.

The circle on the left represents the target market's meaning system and the one on the right represents the brand's personality and attributes. In emotional branding, we need to move our brand over to the target market's meaning system and find a place where our brand's attributes and personality intersect with the target market's meaning system. I call this the "TouchPoint." Every brand in the product category is not going to have an equal opportunity to intersect with the target's meaning system. But when it's done well, it's a beautiful thing. Here are a few examples.

The first is a personal favorite of mine and just a work of genius by whomever hit upon it. It's the Dove campaign that uses real women instead of models. Unlike models, real women have imperfections—too fat, too thin, too old, too wrinkled, etc.—just like we all do. What Dove must have found, probably through focus groups, is that their targeted female consumer is sick and tired of being told she is not "all right." They are tired of striving to look like models, with their unrealistic bodies, faces, and lives. They're mad as hell and they're not going to take it anymore! They want recognition for who they *really* are—total human beings who are intelligent, successful, caring, and, oh by the way, attractive. By using real women in their ads—with all their imperfections—Dove has identified that meaning system and has *reflected* it back at the target market in its advertising. This is emotional strategizing at its best. Understand your target market and make sure, through your advertising, that your brand intersects with their meaning system. Not every brand in this product category could have done this. Dove has always targeted a more mature woman, whereas Herbal Essence, for example, has targeted teens. As a result, Herbal Essence's brand attributes and personality do not intersect the target market's meaning system, as we have described it above—"I'm okay just the way I am, wrinkles and all." Herbal Essence could certainly intersect another meaning system, but probably not the same one Dove has intersected.

Another excellent example is an Oreo commercial that I've admired many times, and perhaps you have, too. Because it's completely different from the Dove example, it also illustrates how far reaching the opportunities exist with emotional strategy. The commercial depicts a father and son sharing the ritual of eating an Oreo cookie with each other. At the end of the commercial it becomes clear that the father is in Hong Kong (probably on business) and his son is somewhere in the United States. Even so, separated by 10,000 miles, the father and his son stay connected over an Oreo. In this case, the target market's meaning system is the importance of a close bond between a father and his son, regardless of the physical distance between them. That is what the commercial is really "selling." The Oreo cookie is just along for the ride. The Oreo is "riding the emotional coattails" of the strong emotional connection between a father and his son.

As I said earlier, I have an emotional attachment to Post Golden Crisp and its mascot, the Sugar Bear. It's not cereal for me. It's love. It's my mom. It's my early years in our apartment. A time when I felt totally safe, happy, and cared for. In one of my classes, I ask the students to write a one-page essay that describes a brand to which they are similarly emotionally attached.

Then they have to read the essay in front of the class, word for word. It's a powerful experience for all of the students—and for me. As a lesson, it drives home the point I make in the first class: everyone has emotional attachments to brands that go beyond reason. Brands that we grow up with get all mixed up with the intense experiences and feelings we have about our parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends. These brands, then, become symbols of family, family time, togetherness, grandparents, vacations, etc. Indeed, it is not an overstatement to say that brands we grow up with literally *become* family. If I grew up with Jif, for example, having Skippy at my table is like having a stranger over for lunch. Jif is family, damn it. Skippy? A stranger. Jif reminds me of when my mom made me peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for lunch. Skippy reminds me of—nothing. For others, of course, it's the reverse; Skippy is family and Jif is the stranger.

Some of the students' stories surrounding these brand attachments are truly touching. They most often include family, times spent as a family, special family rituals (such as watching a DVD as a family every Friday night), grandparents who have since died, the sadness of parents who have divorced, memories dating back to when they were children, etc. When all the essays have been read, I ask the class what these emotional brand stories remind them of. Not to minimize the deep and sincere emotions contained in the essays, the answer is—television commercials! Every one of those essays would make a great television commercial. One that is as emotionally powerful as the Dove and Oreo commercials I have described above. And that's exactly what we want from a commercial if we are using an emotional strategy. In this strategy, it's not about the brand as it exists in reality or in consumers' minds. It's all about how it exists in their *hearts*.

We learned at the beginning of this book that some of the earliest modern examples of advertising—propaganda to build support for World War I—made use of very visceral emotional appeals, the stabbing of the Statue of Liberty in the back, for example. So an emotional strategy is not new by any means. In fact, if anything, it predates the other two main theories of USP and positioning. The reason I put it last on the strategic continuum is because we always have to remember the question every consumer is asking upon seeing an ad: "What's in for me?" USP and positioning answer that question the most directly, so they give us the best shot at actually selling our client's brand.

The USP answers that question best and, therefore, should be the most effective way to promote the brand. Let's go back to the commercial that introduced the iPhone in 2009. Do we need emotional appeals to promote the first iPhone? No. Why? Because the iPhone has truly unique features and benefits that no other cell phone had at that time. As we learned, however, most often there is no unique proposition that we can make for our brand or even a new claim in the category that would "move millions." So we move down the continuum to positioning. Is the category in which our brand finds itself one that has a very dominant brand leader (the 800-pound gorilla)? If yes, then are we the gorilla or are we one of the followers? If, on the other hand, our brand is in a category in which market share is more equally divided among the top brands, then employing a positioning strategy requires finding another anchor for our brand, like they did for Miller High Life, Michelob, and Yoplait. If those conditions or opportunities don't exist, then we play our last card and move to emotional appeals. Moving to that end of the continuum acknowledges that there is nothing rational we can say about our brand that could

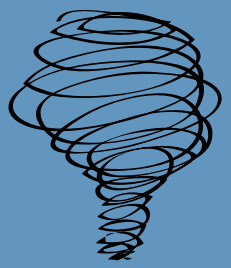
distinguish it from other brands in the category based on its physical attributes (USP) or as consumers perceive it in their minds (positioning). As a result, we are forced to move along the continuum to emotional appeals.

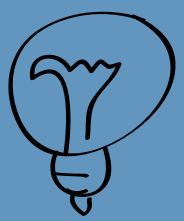
Whew!

This brings us to the end of the strategic part of this book. We made it! Hooray! Now we can finally get creative. I'm sure you can't wait. But this strategic foundation was essential to your copywriting skills. Because all advertising is an execution of a strategy, you can't fully understand the manipulative skills of copywriting without first understanding the strategic manipulation that precedes it. Yet, however important strategy is to advertising, it's nothing without a great execution. As I said earlier, the strategy is like the monster in the *Frankenstein* movie. It's viable in that it's wholly conceived, but it's dead. It has to be brought to life. "It's alive!" as Dr. Frankenstein so memorably said after shooting a bolt of electricity into the monster's brain. And that's just what the execution does for the strategy. It brings the strategy to life. The copywriter (most often working in tandem with the art director) must infuse the strategy with life—humor, pathos, suspense, action, animation, special effects, whatever it takes—so that the target market can relate to it in a meaningful way. That's the next step in learning the art of manipulation. It's all about sleight of hand, smoke and mirrors, and pulling a rabbit out of a hat. It's all about magic. All great copywriters and art directors are magicians. Now it's time to learn their tricks.

NOTES

1. Rosser Reeves, *Reality in Advertising* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), 46–48.
2. Reeves, *Reality in Advertising*, 55.
3. Al Ries and Jack Trout, *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind* (New York: Warner Books, McGraw-Hill, 1981), 45–49.
4. Ries and Trout, *Positioning*, 43.
5. Ries and Trout, *Positioning*, 19–21, 33–34.





Part Two

Bringing the Strategy to Life: Creative Execution

Chapter Four

How to Be a *Creative* Copywriter

Creative copywriter—you might think this redundant. But if you think of all the horrible ads and commercials you have seen, you'll quickly understand why I make the distinction. Many copywriters are among the most uncreative people on the planet. This book will help you avoid that fate.

Before we launch into how to become a creative copywriter, due diligence is required to set the stage. Most of the advertising you admire is done in marketing-communications agencies of one kind or another. Some of these do advertising as we defined it earlier in this book, whereas others are engaged in other marketing-communications subsets such as public relations, direct mail, sales promotion, etc. As I said at the beginning, this book focuses on *advertising* copywriting, but *all* of the marketing-communications subsets or disciplines use copywriting in some form or another.

WHERE DO ADVERTISING COPYWRITERS WORK?

Just as nearly all of the marketing communications is done in some kind of marketing-communications agency, so, too, nearly all of the *advertising* you admire is done at some kind of an *ad agency*. That's not to say you can't do great work at a company or corporation, but it's far more unlikely. So this book is going to focus on ad agencies.

Advertising copywriters can work at full-service ad agencies that include all four of the major functions: creative, media planning, research/account planning, and account management. Or they can work at creative boutiques that only do creative, not the other three functions. In this book, we're concerned only with the creative department. The creative department consists of three primary types of people: copywriters, art directors, and broadcast producers. By the way, in the advertising business, the person responsible for the visual is called an art director, rather than a graphic artist or graphic designer. It dates back to a time when doing the art connected with an advertising campaign was very labor-intensive. So the art director really *was* a director

of art, and had several assistants. Now, computers (almost always Macs) have made all of these assistants unnecessary, but the title is still used.

Bill Bernbach, one of the founders of Doyle Dane Bernbach, is often credited with having copywriters and art directors work together as a team. Before this partnership approach swept across the business in the 1960s, copywriters wrote the copy and then got it approved by the account manager and client, and then (and only then) would it be passed on to the art director, who used to be called a commercial artist. Now, copywriters and art directors routinely work together on a campaign. And because it has become such a successful way to work, if you find yourself at an agency that does *not* work this way, then you are probably at a very bad agency. Get out as fast as you can. Furthermore, when a copywriter–art director team works together they approach the project as creative equals and creative agnostics. What I mean by that is this: as the copywriter I don't limit myself to just thinking about the copy and the art director does not limit himself or herself to just thinking of the visuals. At this early stage of the creative process, we think of great ideas in their *totality*. So I may very well come up with the visual idea and the art director might come up with the headline. This has happened to me many, many times. Once this raw idea for the campaign has been worked out, only then does the copywriter and art director revert to their specific skill sets. The copywriter refines the headline and writes the rest of the copy, and the art director lays out the ad or billboard and does the storyboard if it's a TV commercial. Although this book is specifically about copywriting, for copywriters, all of its principles apply equally to art directors. So if you're on the art side of the team, this book still has plenty to offer you.

SO MANY HATS, SO LITTLE TIME

An advertising copywriter does more than just write copy. A copywriter wears many different "hats." In fact, writing copy, which I call "wordsmithing," is often one of the least important parts of a copywriter's job. For example, that's particularly true in the case in TV, where telling a story with imagery is so much more important. Also, this is as good a time as any to confess that I have always hated the term "copywriter." It strikes me as horribly redundant. What else would a writer do except write copy? And at any decent agency, copywriters are just called writers. But I understand that to those outside of the business the term "copywriter" denotes a particular kind of writer—one who writes advertising. So I've decided to just grit my teeth and use the term in this book.

Now on to the copywriter's impressive collection of hats that we'll explore throughout this book:

- Idea person
- Visual thinker
- Wordsmith
- Screenwriter
- Lyricist (and sometimes even songwriter)
- Film producer
- Salesperson

I think that does it. You'll notice that even though I've accepted the term "copywriter," the actual writing of copy is third, not first, on the list. The first job of any advertising copywriter in any agency is to generate fresh ideas. Ideas are king in the advertising business. Ultimately, that is what every ad agency is selling. Not cars. Not nuts and bolts. Not stuff of any physical kind. But ideas. Without fresh ideas, nothing else on the list is possible. A great copywriter is bursting with ideas. It's not a chore for great copywriters to think of ideas. It's fun! They'd be doing it anyway, even if they weren't being paid. They have tremendous mental and creative energy that just can't be contained.

HOW TO THINK CREATIVELY

Are you creative? The answer is a resounding yes! I don't know you, but I do know that you are human. And all humans are creative. That's the reason we are the top species (for better or worse) on the planet. We got to the top because we are creative problem solvers. The woolly mammoths are extinct because we ate them and used their hides to keep warm. The saber tooth tigers are extinct because we killed them for trying to eat *us*. The mammoths were far bigger than we, and the saber tooth tigers were far fiercer than we. So how did we win out? Creative thinking. When one of our distant relatives walked up to a mammoth and tried to spear it in a frontal assault, the mammoth stomped him. Hmm. Well that didn't work. So we used creative thinking to solve the problem. What one caveman couldn't do, perhaps several could. A new tactic emerged. One caveman stabbed the mammoth in the butt to distract it, then the other put his spear right into the mammoth's heart. Problem solved. The power of creative thinking always wins out. So the point is this: if you are human, you are creative. Period.

The definition we will use here is this: **creativity** is using preexisting elements or components in new, unusual, and unexpected ways. It's all about making new connections among preexisting elements. Under this definition, everyone can be creative in his or her work—janitors, brain surgeons, teachers, bricklayers—everyone. Even a copywriter! The mistake most of us make is to think of only those in the arts and entertainment as being creative. Certainly, they are creative, but so are all human beings. In this book, we are not concerned with being a creative janitor, brain surgeon, teacher, or bricklayer. We are only concerned with being a creative copywriter.

So how do you get to this point of bursting with ideas? Some are born that way. They just have an incredible amount of creative activity surging through their minds at all times. But what about the vast majority of the rest of us? Can you learn to be a creative thinker? Of course you can, just like you can learn anything else. Just like our distant relatives learned to hunt woolly mammoths. As a human being, creative thinking is literally in our DNA. It's just that most of us don't see ourselves as creative. We don't push ourselves. This book will teach you how to tap into your enormous creative potential. Here's the secret, and I'm not even going to charge you extra for it.

THE SECRET TO CREATIVITY

Feed your head.

Not with drugs or alcohol as Grace Slick was referring to in "White Rabbit," but with information, data, knowledge, life experiences, travel, etc. The more of these "pieces of data" you have in your head, the more chances your unconscious mind will find new ways to connect them. Those unexpected connections are what we call great ideas. The more knowledge you possess, the more unusual connections you'll make, and the more creative you'll be. That's the secret. There is no useless knowledge. It's all important. So feed your head. All day. Every day. Creative people have insatiable curiosity. I'm not sure if they're creative because they're curious or they're curious because they're creative. Whichever way it works, feed raw knowledge into your unconscious mind and it will use it—when, how, and where it needs it.

Whoa! The unconscious mind? Huh?

Most of you refer to the unconscious mind as the subconscious. That is just as accurate and perfectly okay. I have come to call it the "unconscious" mind because it puts the emphasis where I think it belongs—out of the realm of our consciousness, deep, deep within our primal selves. It is also known as the right side of the brain—from which creative thinking springs—as opposed to the left side, which is the more linear and rational side. Regardless of what you call it, this part of your brain is the home to all creativity. It's the home of "free association," by which I mean nonlinear thinking.

Nonlinear thinking *is* creative thinking. If you remember our definition of creativity—connecting preexisting elements in new, unusual, and unexpected ways—then you'll see why nonlinear thinking is so vital to creativity. On the left side of our brains, the linear side, "B" follows "A" and "C" follows "B," and so forth. On the right side of our brains, however, "Z" follows "A" and "F" follows "C," and so forth. If these letters of the alphabet represent pieces of data, you'll get a better idea of how the unconscious mind works. Unlike the conscious mind, there's no rhyme or reason to how the unconscious mind thinks. Good. That's exactly what we're looking for. *That* is creativity—unexpected, unusual, new ways of connecting old data. This is the kind of thinking you need to tap into if you want to think creatively. What does this kind of nonlinear thinking remind you of? Anybody? How about dreaming? Exactly right. Our dreams arise from our unconscious minds while our conscious minds are at rest. In order to be a creative thinker, you need to *simulate* the nonlinear quality of dreaming while you're awake. You need to nurture your unconscious mind and get your arms around it. That's where all your great ideas are going to come from, so you better be nice to it!

In fact, thinking of your unconscious mind in that way—as a separate person—is very useful. Your unconscious mind, for all practical purposes, is infinite. It's far more powerful than our conscious minds. It can handle millions of times more data. Indeed, it's because our unconscious minds are doing all the "heavy lifting" that our conscious minds are able to contemplate the universe, engage in speech, and read this book on unconscious minds! Need proof? Consider these. How many of you right now are making sure your cells divide? Nobody? Your unconscious mind is. How many of you right now are making sure your heart beats? Nobody? Your

unconscious mind is. Finally, how many of you are directing your lungs to take in oxygen and expel carbon dioxide? Nobody? You guessed it. Your unconscious mind is. And it's doing it all effortlessly. It hasn't even broken a sweat. Some Eastern religions think of the unconscious mind as the collective consciousness: "You are he and you are me and we are all together …" as John Lennon sang in "I am the Walrus." Yes, it's kind of like that. It's the collective consciousness—or intelligence—of the universe. Maybe it's what we refer to as "God." Obviously, metaphysics is beyond the scope of this book, but your unconscious mind is a mysterious and amazing creature—and it's sitting right on everyone's shoulders! Yet few of us ever put it to work. It's capable of so, so much but we ask so, so little of it. If you want to be a creative, that has to stop right now. You need to get your arms around your unconscious mind and hold it tight. Give it its due. And maybe, just maybe, it will reward you with genius.

But how? How do you get your arms around this unruly beast and nudge it along? Going back to where we started, you do it by feeding your head. Your unconscious mind will do the creative work for you, but *you* need to give it something to work with. Furthermore, the more *divergent* the data you feed your unconscious mind, the better. Let's use the letters of the alphabet to illustrate. Each letter represents a different kind of data. If you have lots of pieces of data in your unconscious mind, but they are all "A," how many unusual, unexpected, fresh connections can you make? Well, not many, because we only have "As" to work with. You can come up with "AA" or "AAA," or how about "AAAA"? You get my point. Our creative thinking is severely limited because what's in our unconscious mind is severely limited—there's nothing but "As" in there!

However, what happens when we feed our unconscious minds with wildly divergent data—"Ds" and "Ps" and "Ys" and "Gs" and so on. Now you've given your unconscious mind something to work with! With all this divergent data in there, you've given it the tools it needs to make new and unexpected connections—the very definition of creativity. Instead of just "As," now we have many pieces of data and, therefore, many, many unexpected and unusual ways of connecting them. We might come up with "DY" or "YD" or "PPP" or "PDYG" or—well you get the point. The opportunity for your unconscious mind to make new and unexpected connections has skyrocketed—and your creativity will follow. And that's just using four letters. Just think of all the new and unusual connections your unconscious mind will make with 26 letters! The moral is: when you give your unconscious mind lots of *divergent* data your creativity—*as a direct result*—will explode.

These letters of the alphabet, of course, signify different kinds of knowledge. You need to feed your unconscious mind with wildly eclectic data—by reading, by listening, by traveling, by seeing, by experiencing! Personally, I read a lot of newspapers, magazines, and nonfiction. I like the feeling of learning something new every day. I think the highly topical nature of newspapers, magazines, nonfiction, news programs, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter give your unconscious mind lots to work with. The key here is to feed in *divergent* information. It's okay to read *People* magazine religiously, as long as you also read Kant and Plato. It's fine to watch mindless TV reality shows, as long as you also watch *Frontline*. It's fine to watch sports, but also go to operas and see Shakespeare performed live. The more divergent the data you feed into your unconscious mind, the more new and unexpected connections it will deliver for you—that is, great ideas. Travel in

particular brings all sorts of new information into your unconsciousness. And, just as before, the more divergent your travel experiences the better. Get out of your comfort zone and travel to places where you have lots to learn. Your unconscious mind is like a dry sponge. It will greedily absorb it all! Remember, for all practical purposes, its capability is infinite. Throw anything and everything at it and you will be richly rewarded. Those cells are in your brain instead of your butt because they are made to *think*. And they will think if you give them something to think about. It doesn't matter what you throw at your unconscious mind, it can easily handle it. Even if your conscious mind doesn't understand what you are reading, watching, hearing, and experiencing, just keep inputting all that rich data—just as if you were doing data entry on a computer. Don't worry about *consciously* making any sense of it. Your unconscious mind will figure it all out and send it up to your conscious mind when it deems the time is right. Soon, you will be bursting with ideas. You will be making unusual and unexpected connections all over the place! You will be living the creative life.

All of the great ideas I have had in my advertising career have come from my unconscious mind. I have won nearly every major advertising award—the *Communication Arts* Award of Merit for my Van Camp's pork and beans campaign, a Clio for my Sunbeam "Mr. Sharpy" commercial, and the Art Directors Club of New York award for my "We need bullets like we need a hole in the head" campaign. And all of them came from my unconscious mind. All the big, big ideas you come up with—in advertising or out of it—come from your unconscious mind. It doesn't always deliver. Sometimes you have to force things and revert back to your conscious mind because deadlines are looming. But if you nurture your unconscious mind as we have discussed here, your unconscious mind will reward you with a nearly unending flow of great ideas.

WORKING WITH YOUR UNCONSCIOUS MIND

Your unconscious mind is an unruly beast. As creative as it can be, it works on its own schedule and by its own rules. Here's how to get on its good side.

First, and foremost, give it enough time. When you have a campaign to work on, feed the information into your unconscious mind as soon as possible. I like to treat my unconscious mind as almost a separate person or an infinite computer that just happens to be sitting on top of my shoulders. Then, once you've entered in the information, go on to other things and forget about the project. This is an essential step and scary when you have a deadline to meet. But you must give your unconscious mind plenty of breathing room if you want it to deliver for you. Every creative knows that the more time he or she has the better chance of coming up with a great idea. The reason is the workings of the unconscious mind. It's on its own schedule and you can't rush it.

Now you wait. And, gradually, you forget all about it. That's when it hits! Call it what you may—the "illumination," the proverbial light bulb clicking on, the "aha!" moment, whatever metaphor you'd like. It's eureka time! The big idea has seemingly come out of nowhere and slammed you in the head. It's often perfectly formed and a beautiful thing to behold. But don't be in awe too long.

You must write the idea down immediately or, as sure as you forget a dream, you will forget this idea. It will drift back down deep, deep into your unconscious mind. And then it's gone forever. Always keep a notepad and pen nearby for times like that. You never know when your unconscious mind is going to send up a winner to your conscious mind. In fact, think of your mind as a lake. Your conscious mind is above the water; your unconscious mind below it. When your unconscious mind sends a great idea to the surface, to your conscious mind, you have to grab it! Just like a fisherman grabs a fish with his net. If you don't, the idea (and the fish) is gone forever, just like that dream you had last night and swore you would remember so you could tell everyone. But once you wake, somehow, you just can't get your hands around it. Like trying to catch water between your fingers, it's close but impossible to grasp.

When you're just starting out, it's awfully hard to trust your unconscious mind. Going back to my analogy that it is like a separate person, you need time to build a relationship with it and a level of trust. It takes time, but it's worth the effort. After all, it's the home of all great ideas, and you have to go there and pay homage. As your relationship develops, you'll begin to trust each other. Your unconscious mind will trust that you're doing your share by feeding it plenty of divergent data. And you, in turn, will begin to trust that it will deliver you great ideas. Never on your schedule, but on its own.

WRITER'S BLOCK

If you're any kind of writer, including a copywriter, you've faced writer's block. The ideas just aren't coming. Your unconscious mind is not delivering. How do you nudge it along? Here are some of the ways that have worked for me and other writers I know. In all of these techniques your goal is to tamp down your conscious mind in order to free your unconscious mind.

Music is a big one. That old saying, "music speaks to the soul," is so true. Music somehow flies right past your conscious mind and frees up your unconsciousness.

White noise is another that has worked for me. One of my favorite places to think of ideas was at a club. I hate to date myself, but to be more specific—discos. You would think that being surrounded by lots of noise and lights and activity would be distracting. And it would be if you were actually writing, putting words to paper. But in the process *before* putting words to paper, when you are thinking of raw ideas, all that white noise is actually freeing. Once again, my guess is because all that activity is tamping down our conscious minds so that our unconscious minds can come to the fore.

Movement has always freed up my creative juices. Some of my best ideas come to me when I'm driving for a long period of time. That's why I always keep a notepad on the seat next to me—to quickly jot down raw ideas. Again, my guess is that the process of watching the road lulls my conscious mind into underdrive and frees up my unconsciousness. And, for me, that is true of any movement, whether I'm in a car, on a train, or on a boat.

These are the three devices that work best for me. Here are some others that might work for you. Working out is a big one for many. Perhaps the intense physical strain somehow frees

up our unconscious thinking. Leisurely walking is another. Lastly, just lying on your back and watching the clouds drift overhead can be so relaxing that the unconscious mind just jumps into overdrive.

So, in defeating writer's block all of these techniques have one thing in common—they calm our conscious minds so that our unconscious minds can come to the fore and free up all those great ideas.

Here's the bad news: sometimes none of this works.

If, after all this, still nothing comes, then just take the advice of that great Beatles' song and "let it be." As I said earlier, the unconscious mind is an unruly beast and will not follow any schedule but its own. So sometimes you just have to respect that and back off. Give it plenty of space and hope it will deliver before your deadline. If not, then you have to revert to plan B and force the creativity by using your conscious mind. The results will never be as good. As I said, the ideas that have won awards for me have always come from my unconscious mind. But as a professional, if your unconscious mind does not deliver, *you* still have to. That's part of being a professional. It won't be your best work. But it will be solid and respectable.

FLIPPING PARADIGMS: FIND THE EXPECTED, THEN DO THE UNEXPECTED

If your unconscious mind isn't delivering for you and deadlines are looming, you have to move to plan B and force your creative thinking via your conscious mind. The best way to do this is to focus on the visual element in your execution, because once you have a great visual you're 90 percent on your way to having great advertising. And this type of visual creative thinking can be greatly enhanced by first identifying the visual paradigm—what visual is expected? Once you know what's expected, it will be easier to come up with something that's *unexepected* (i.e., creative). Flipping visual paradigms spurs your creative thinking. My definition, and the one we're going to use here, is that a **paradigm** is an accepted way of doing, seeing, or thinking of something to such an extent that we don't even consider any other way. I call it "flipping the paradigm" because we're taking what's expected by your targeted consumers and flipping it on its head so that it's unexpected.

Paradigms are the enemy of all great advertising. In fact, as an advertising copywriter, you are in the paradigm-busting business. From the overall concept to the visuals to the copy, we should always be flipping paradigms.

Before you can flip a paradigm, however, you have to *find* the paradigm. That then acts as your creative anchor. Now that you know what is *expected*, you will have a much easier time of thinking of something *unexpected* (i.e., creative). Remember our definition of creativity: connecting preexisting elements in unusual, new, and unexpected ways. We always want to surprise our target markets. Consumers are first of all people. And people are interested in *news*—things they don't already know. Newspaper writers have it easy. What they write in the *New York Times*, and any other paper, has inherent news value. After all that's why they're called *news*papers. They have *new* things in them. As an advertising copywriter, your ads also need to have news value.

But unlike a journalist, you have to *create* this news value *artificially* by providing your target markets with unusual, new, and unexpected ways to see and think about your brands.

Number two on the "copywriter's list of hats" is visual thinker. Visual creativity provides the perfect example of what I mean by flipping paradigms, so let's start there.

The visual is the single most important element in any execution, regardless of the medium. All great advertising is simple, visual, and single-mindedly focused on the benefit to the consumer. The old adage, "a picture is worth a thousand words," goes triple for advertising. Images grab our attention better than words. They're more memorable than words. And they're more manipulative than words. So I would say that advertising without a great visual is just bad advertising. And the reverse is equally true. When you have a great visual, you're 90 percent on your way to having great advertising. That's how important visuals are to advertising. In turn, that's why they're so important for you. Thinking of unexpected visuals is too important to leave to just your art director partner. Remember, you learned earlier that when a copywriter and art director first get together to work on a campaign they are creative agnostics. She's not an art director and you're not a copywriter. At that early stage, you are just *creatives*. Even though your title is "copywriter," you need to think as visually as your art director.

But what *is* a great visual?

A great visual startles you with its uniqueness, grabs you by the collar, and drags you into the advertising. Advertising can do nothing until it grabs you. It can't make you aware. It can't persuade you. It can't manipulate you. First, it must grab your attention, and the visual does that. Great visuals attain greatness because they are attention-getting, compelling, memorable, and—most of all—unexpected. You always want to surprise your targeted consumers with visuals they're not expecting.

Okay, having said that, let's get back to our example of how to actually think of great visuals. When you're flipping the paradigm, the place to start is with the paradigm. It provides the anchor from which we'll launch our paradigm-flipping visual. If great visuals are attention-getting, compelling, memorable, and unexpected, then bad visuals are the reverse—ho-hum, boring, forgettable, and expected.

Here's an example I use in my classes. What if we wanted to think of unexpected visuals for a business meeting? First, we would mentally picture the paradigm—a group of men and women dressed in business attire sitting around an oval conference table with someone at the head. That's the paradigm—a very expected, ordinary, boring visual. Now, how can we turn that bad visual into a great visual? Simple, we "flip" the expected, ordinary, and boring into the unexpected, extraordinary, and exciting.

The students are always bursting with ideas at this point because it's so easy to come up with a great visual once we know what a bad visual looks like (i.e., the paradigm). So what are the ideas the students come up with? Well, instead of a man or woman at the head of the conference table, let's make it a chimpanzee. How often do you see a chimp leading a business meeting? Never. Exactly. And that's why it's such a great visual. It has *news value*. Your targeted consumers want to find out more. You've grabbed them. Why *is* a chimp leading this meeting? Now I have a visual that is intrusive, memorable, and manipulative. We've scored a bull's-eye and we didn't even break a sweat.

It was easy and fun! And that particular paradigm flip is just *one* idea. I'm sure you can come up with lots more. How about these: every person at the meeting is nude; one person at the meeting is nude; the meeting is taking place at the bottom of the ocean or on Mount Everest or in outer space; there are no humans at the meeting, only animals dressed like humans. And so on and so on—the ideas are flowing like a torrent. We are literally *bursting* with great visual ideas. So this is how you go about thinking of great advertising when your unconscious mind fails you. You start with your visuals. You find what's expected and then you do the *reverse*. You find the paradigm and then you *flip it on its head*. Once you've done that, you are 90 percent on your way to great advertising. Always ask yourself: do your visuals beg to be *explored* or *ignored*?

SUPER VISUALS: VISUAL METAPHORS FOR THE BENEFIT

Some visuals are so powerful that I call them "super visuals." Super visuals are visual metaphors for the consumer benefit. As such, they often don't even need a headline to be effective. The headline seems superfluous. I can describe super visuals best by giving you three quick examples.

My favorite super visual was for a recent Lifesavers campaign (Figure 4.1). The print ad is horizontally split in half. On the top, there is a photo of a cherry with a hole taken out of it that's the same size of a Lifesaver. On the bottom half of the ad is a bag of sugar-free Lifesavers. This is what I mean by a visual metaphor for the benefit. The benefit, in this case, is "real cherry flavor." Why would we be so anxious to tell our target market that sugar-free Lifesavers have real cherry flavor? Well, because you can bet that consumers in focus groups had said that sugar-free candy does *not* have "real cherry flavor." The advertising wants to immediately overcome this objection with this visual metaphor for the benefit—real cherry flavor. Then the campaign unfolds from this beautifully simple idea. The other two executions that come to mind are a whole watermelon with a Lifesaver-sized hole plucked out of it, and then a whole pineapple with the same hole cut from it. These other two are equally powerful visual metaphors for the benefit—real watermelon flavor and real pineapple flavor. The headlines are nothing special, and they don't need to be because the visuals say it all. They are almost superfluous when we have visuals of this magnitude.

This Lifesavers campaign is brilliant and instructive for many reasons. First, the creatives have come up with a super visual, and all great advertising is first and foremost visual. Secondly, this visual is not only unexpected (how often do you see a perfectly sized hole plucked from a cherry?), but it *also* visually communicates without any words the benefit of our brand to its targeted consumer. Pure genius. But there's more! As I said, you can hear the focus group in this ad because this campaign is telling consumers that the objections they raised in the focus group—that sugar-free candy can't have real fruit flavor is *wrong*—at least when it comes to Lifesavers. Last, this campaign is a perfect example of Reeves' manifesto in *Reality in Advertising* of "one ad—one idea." Keep it simple. Because we are pursuing our consumers, rather than they pursuing us, we need to keep our advertising simple, visual, and single-mindedly focused on the benefit. Complicated advertising does not get read, watched, or listened to. Consumers don't want to *work* to extract what they need from your advertising. You have to serve it up to them

Figure 4.1

Figure 4.2

on a silver platter. It needs to be easy, quick, and fun. Snap your fingers. Did you do it? Well, that's how long you have to grab your consumer. This Lifesavers campaign does that in spades. Equally powerful is the Clorox ad (Figure 4.2). What's this ad telling the target market? It's telling consumers that all of the cleaning and disinfecting power of original Clorox bleach is in this new Clorox cleaner. Clorox's 100-year-old heritage is literally powering up its new brands.

My second example is a magazine campaign I did for Stokely fruits and vegetables (Figures 4.3–4.5). As always, it started with a simple, straightforward strategy. At the input meeting at Stokely headquarters in Indianapolis, the group brand manager set it out perfectly: "I'm tired of hearing how frozen fruits and vegetables are the next best thing to fresh; in reality canned fruits and vegetables are the next thing to fresh because they are vacuum packed literally right in the fields from which they are harvested."

Because my art director partner was busy on another assignment, I had to move ahead on this campaign without him in order to make our deadline. I'll never forget how the campaign came to me—whole, simple, *visual*. With the group brand manager's dictate screaming in my head, I saw in my mind's eye a stalk of corn with its husk pulled away revealing not the corn, but the *cans* of Stokely corn. This visual said it all. It perfectly visualized the group brand manager's strategy with a visual metaphor of the benefit—"the next best thing" to *fresh*. I then played out this same visual with the green beans by showing tiny cans of Stokely green beans lined up in a cut-open bean, and then for Stokely fruit cocktail a Stokely can of fruit cocktail in place of a peach pit. All three of them paid off the strategy visually and met the criteria of all visuals—that they be unusual, unexpected, *news*. Visually, I had shown consumers something that they hadn't seen before, and they were interested. They wanted to find out more. I know this for a fact because

the corn ad was Starch tested and scored incredibly high in all key attributes: its stopping power, recall of key copy points, and depth of readership. In fact, the consumers were so interested in the ad that even the body copy had nearly 90 percent recall. The average is about 20 percent. So we definitely had a winner here, and the group brand manager knew it as soon as he saw the campaign. It sold that same day, and we were in production within a month. The campaign went on to be chosen as one of *Advertising Age*'s top 10 print campaigns of that year.

Here are two more examples of how to use visual metaphors (Figures 4.6–4.7). This time, though, the visual metaphors are not for the *benefit*, but for the *problem* that the benefit is going to *solve*. Look at the Align ad. It visually represents how out of balance we feel when constipated. Align, of course, solves the problem. In fact, its brand name *is* the consumer benefit. Prescription drug advertising is rich with examples. Today there's a pill for every aliment—allergies, insomnia, depression, etc. Nexium offers a pill for acid-reflux relief. Most of the advertising for prescription drugs goes back to the earliest days of advertising in which a problem was created that the brand then solved. As we learned, Listerine created "halitosis," so their brand could solve it. Here, the drug companies are using the same strategy. The visual metaphor in this case is taking the teeth of a saw and combining them with a triangular slice of pizza.

The message of the Nexium campaign is clear to anyone who suffers from acid reflux: eating highly acidic tomato sauce on pizza is going to feel like the teeth of a saw going down my esophagus. But fear not, dear consumer, there is an easy and reliable solution—Nexium. Pop a Nexium before indulging in your favorite foods and that horrible sawing feeling goes away. The campaign played out this great idea in TV with another visual metaphor for the problem. In this case, picture a family gathered for Thanksgiving dinner. The dad, who obviously loves to eat, is at the head of the table. He takes some turkey and then his wife offers him some delicious gravy. But as he reaches for the ladle, he doesn't see a bowl of gravy, he sees a bowl of *nails*. Why? Because anyone who suffers from acid reflux knows that's exactly how that gravy is going to *feel* as it goes down their esophagus. Dad's smile quickly turns to dread, and he passes on the gravy. How sad for a man who clearly loves to eat. He can't even enjoy his Thanksgiving meal! Life's not worth living without gravy on your turkey! All of those messages are careening through that commercial and hitting the target market right where they live—in their acid reflux!

These four examples demonstrate the power of super visuals. When thinking visually, they are the gold standard you should aspire to. You and your art director partner should always try to come up with a super visual for your campaign, regardless of the medium—yes, even in radio. Not possible? Sure it is. Look again at the pizza ad. Instead of *seeing* the teeth of the saw, what if we just *heard* the teeth as they grind their way down an esophagus? Ouch! I can hear it and almost feel it. Right? In fact, the *sound* of the problem might actually be more effective as a visual metaphor. Using sound effects like this to trigger visual and visceral cues are among the tricks you'll learn later in the chapter on radio.

You can taste the sunshine.
Stokely's Finest® canned fruits and vegetables always taste fresh and delicious. And no wonder. They're processed within hours of the time they're picked. And there are no preservatives added. Would everyone go to that kind of trouble and expense to capture a little sunshine? It's worth it to Stokely, because it's worth it to you.
Nature sends her very best...from Stokely U.S.A.
Stokely
VAN CAMP'S
GOLDEN CORN

Figure 4.3

You can taste the sunshine.
Stokely's Finest® canned fruits and vegetables always taste fresh and delicious. And no wonder. They're processed within hours of the time they're picked. And there are no preservatives added. Would everyone go to that kind of trouble and expense to capture a little sunshine? It's worth it to Stokely, because it's worth it to you.
Nature sends her very best...from Stokely U.S.A.

Figure 4.4

You can taste the sunshine.
Stokely's Finest® canned fruits and vegetables always taste fresh and delicious. And no wonder. They're processed within hours of the time they're picked. And there are no preservatives added. Would everyone go to that kind of trouble and expense to capture a little sunshine? It's worth it to Stokely, because it's worth it to you.
Nature sends her very best...from Stokely U.S.A.
Stokely
FRUIT COCKTAIL

Figure 4.5

It's different
for people with
acid reflux disease.
It's not just heartburn you may have to worry about, but the threat of a damaged esophagus.
If you suffer from acid reflux disease, any food can trigger an attack of heartburn. And over time, all that churning acid could do real harm to your esophagus. So, if you've changed your diet and treated your symptoms, but the heartburn still comes back two or more days a week, ask your doctor about prescription NEXIUM.
Unlike your stomach, the lining of your esophagus offers little protection against churning acid. When acid rises into the esophagus–even if you feel only a little heartburn–it can eventually wear away the lining. This condition is called erosive esophagitis and only a doctor can determine if you have it.
That's why you should ask your doctor about NEXIUM. The Healing Purple Pill. For many, just one NEXIUM a day–along with a sensible diet and lifestyle changes–can mean 24-hour heartburn relief. And NEXIUM goes deeper, for most people healing the erosions in your esophagus caused by acid reflux disease. Most erosions heal in 4 to 8 weeks. Your results may vary.
NEXIUM has a low occurrence of side effects, the most common being headache, diarrhea, and abdominal pain. Symptom relief does not rule out serious stomach conditions.
Next time, ask your doctor about NEXIUM. The Healing Purple Pill.
Healing Is Such A Great Feeling.
AstraZeneca
Please read the important Product Information about NEXIUM on the following page and discuss it with your doctor.
Visit purplepill.com today for a FREE Trial Offer
Nexium
(esomeprazole magnesium)
1-800-49-NEXIUM

Figure 4.6

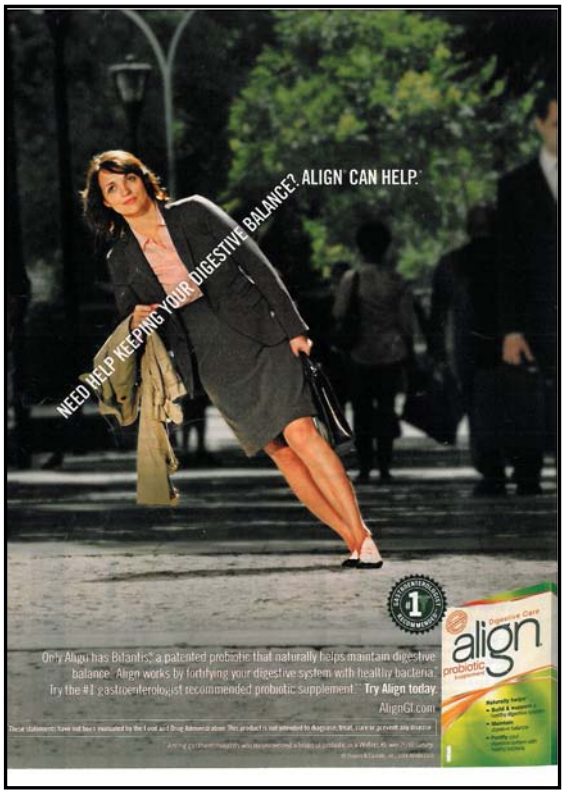


Figure 4.7

THE IMPORTANCE OF "CLEAN LIVING" TO CREATIVITY

Before we move on to the specifics of being a wordsmith, I want to say one more thing about the process of creativity in general. People who use alcohol and drugs to jump start their creativity are frauds. Once they sober up or come down from their high, the ideas they came up with reveal themselves to be equally fraudulent. In fact, as unromantic as this may be, I believe living "clean" is what really spurs creativity. By "clean living," I mean eating nutritionally, keeping physically fit, sleeping enough and well, surrounding yourself with positive people whom you love and who love you, giving to others in need, well you see where I'm going here. When you eat well and exercise vigorously, the blood flows freely to your brain, carrying the oxygen it needs to keep the synapses that connect your brain cells firing up with tiny bursts of electricity. This, in turn, keeps your brain supple, healthy and, well . . . creatively *charged*.

I came to this way of thinking when I did a campaign for the State of Illinois that encouraged its citizens to be organ donors. In the process of acquiring knowledge to do the campaign, we talked with the neurologist who came up with the definition of brain death (because then and only then can the person's organs be harvested). The definition of brain death that was adopted was that it was a lack of blood flow to the brain for at least five minutes. So, I got to thinking, if this is the definition of brain *death*, then brain *life* must be the opposite—lots of blood flowing to the brain. Stroke victims bear this out. A stroke is a "heart attack in the brain" brought about by a clot that blocks the blood flow the brain needs to function. If blood flow to the brain is

not restored quickly, the brain begins to die, causing any number of disabilities, and eventually brain death. So, now that you have your tutorial in brain life and death, back to the point. Supple, oxygen-filled brains—not muddled drug- and alcohol-filled brains—are the most likely to produce the great ideas you crave.

However romantic the "doomed artist" may be, those great creative thinkers were not creative because they drank to excess and were high on drugs. Rather, they were creative *in spite* of that abuse. In other words, they were so creative that even alcohol and drug abuse could not quell their immense creative powers. So if you're looking to keep the creative juices flowing, spend your time at a gym not a bar. Feed your brain with highly nutritious foods, not highly noxious drugs. Living the clean life will always keep your creative peak ahead of you instead of behind you.

Chapter Five

Wordsmithing in Print

Let's start with a story. It's the early 1500s and Pope Julius II calls Michelangelo and me to the Sistine Chapel. He says, "I want to fill this ceiling and these walls with the greatest art the world has ever seen." He tells us to come back in two weeks with our ideas. The two weeks pass and Pope Julius summons us to the Chapel. "Okay," he says, "what have you got?" Michelangelo goes first and the Pope is very impressed with his vision. I go next and the Pope is equally impressed with my ideas. Who gets the job? And why? If you answered that I should get the job, I'm very flattered, but have to give you the bad news—Michelangelo got the gig. But why? The Pope was equally impressed with my ideas for the Chapel. Why Michael and not me? The reason is because Michelangelo can actually *do* what he envisions for the Sistine Chapel and I *can't*. Michelangelo has the *craft*—painting—and I *don't*. So no matter how great my ideas, I can't *execute* them. Period. And Michelangelo *can*. The moral of this story is this: wordsmithing is your painting. As a copywriter, words are your *craft*, just as painting is Michelangelo's craft. They are your means of *communication*—your way of getting what's in your head out here so the rest of us can appreciate it. So when wordsmithing is your craft, you have to deliver. After all, you are telling your agency and its clients that you are *such* a good writer that you expect to be paid to do it. Now you're a *professional writer*.

Your role as a wordsmith will vary depending on the medium in which you are working. Writing for TV is very different than writing for print. That, in turn, is very different than writing for out-of-home, radio, or the Internet. When I teach my copywriting class, I always start with print, specifically magazine ads. I know that very few young people read magazines in hardcopy. But even if you read them on your laptop and tablet, the principles of a good print ad still apply. I like to start with print because it stays in one place. It "stands still" so we can study it, analyze it, dissect it. In contrast, imagine a 30-second TV commercial. Here now, gone in 30 seconds. Poof! It's hard to study a TV commercial. You have to play it over and over and over again. Plus, you have so much more to study—imagery, sound, editing, talent, performances, music, and so on. By comparison, a magazine ad is simple. It is static, so we can really examine what makes it tick.

In print, there are two distinct parts to being a wordsmith. The first is writing headlines; the second is writing body copy. This part of your job proves the adage that the devil is in the details. We have the big idea and a compelling visual. Now we have to flesh out the execution and maximize its potential with *words*. Think back to the Van Camp's campaign. We had the big idea—compare Van Camp's to nutritious foods—and we had the visual—wrap the Van Camp's label around those foods. But where would we have been if we didn't use the "you don't know beans" cliché in the headline? I think you see what I mean. It all would have fallen flat. It's true, as I have pointed out, that the visual is the star in all advertising, but every star needs a featured player. And that featured player is your words.

HOW CONSUMERS READ PRINT ADS

Before we can create a good print ad, we have to analyze how a consumer reads one. Research indicates that the consumer's eyes move over the ad in a very definite order. A print ad has four components: visual, headline, logo, and body copy (Figure 5.1). First, the consumer goes to the visual, because visuals communicate instantly. That's the first thing the consumer is going to see and, as I outlined earlier, it's the main component in getting attention. Then the reader goes to the headline for explanation, amplification, and illustration of that visual. From there, the consumer goes down to the logo to see who this ad is for. And lastly, the consumer goes to the body copy. Do you know how many consumers read the body copy? Research says only about 20 percent. What that means for you as a copywriter is this: if you're saving your consumer benefit (which answers the question all consumers are asking themselves upon seeing an ad—"What's in it for me?"), then 80 percent of your consumers will never read it. And they'll turn the page. In order to be sure your brand's consumer benefit is communicated, it must be done with the visual, headline, and logo, because that's all 80 percent of your readers are ever going to see. My students often thought that hiding the consumer benefit in the body copy was clever and creative. It's not. It's just bad advertising. You have to lay it on them quickly and simply because consumers are only going to spend a split second with you—a snap of your fingers. You may be in love with your ad, but they aren't. To them it is an intrusion. They don't care about your ad; you have to *make* them care. You do that by appealing to their self-interest, by answering the question foremost in their minds: "What's in it for me?"

Having said that 80 percent of the readers will never read your body copy, what about the 20 percent who *will*? We can say this—they are very, very interested. To use a fishing analogy, we've got a live one on the line and we have to reel it in. We have to close the sale. And the body copy is the place to do it. I'll explain how, but first we must go back to the headline—the most important copy element in the ad, and the second place readers are going to go after the visual. You've learned what constitutes a great visual, now you're going to learn the same about headlines.

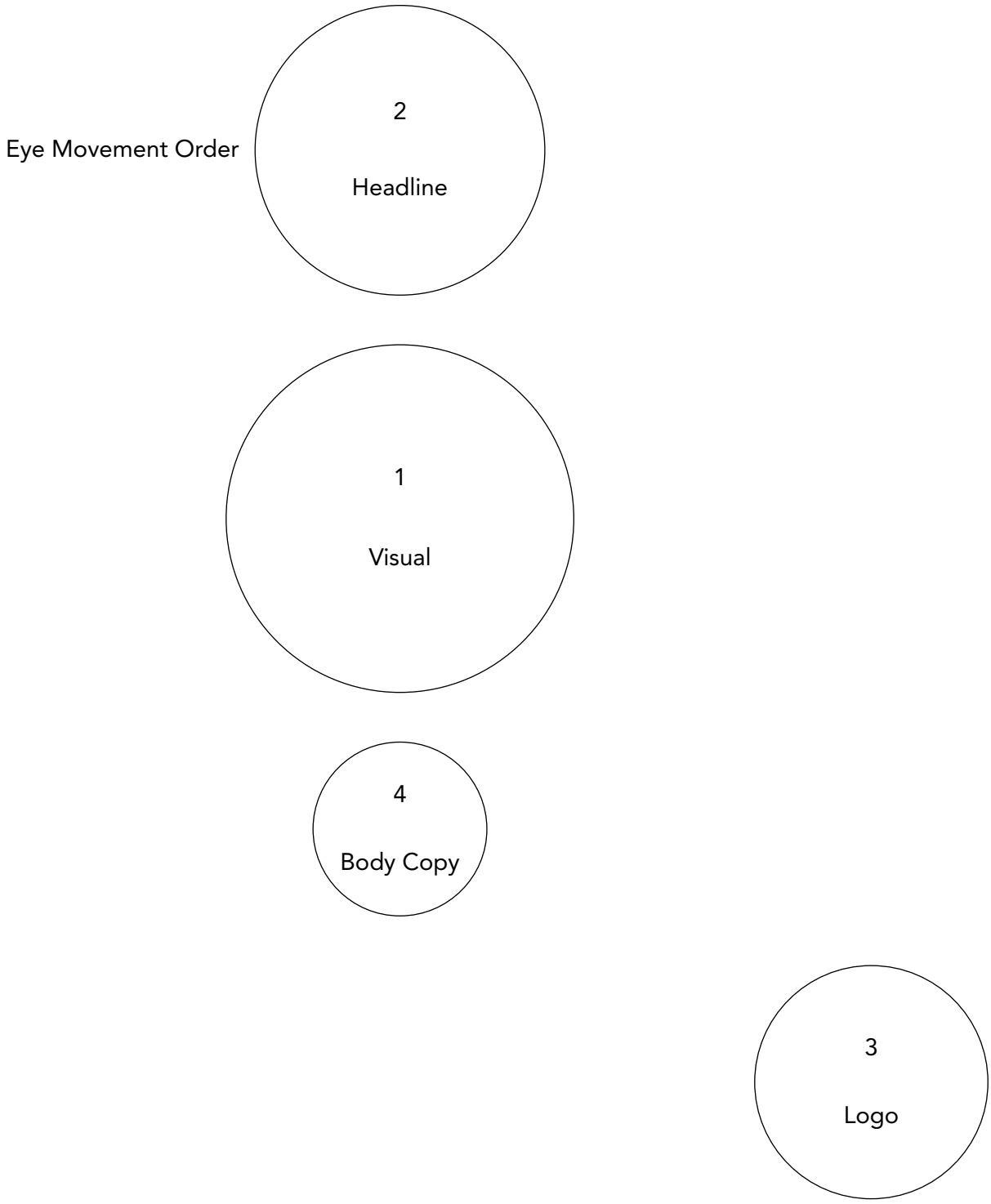


Figure 5.1

WORDSMITHING THE HEADLINE

We've already discussed how important unexpected visuals are to advertising. We also went into great detail as to how to flip the paradigm and come up with those unexpected visuals. Now it's time to give the second most important element of the print ad its due—the headline. Every headline must do two things: first, it must contain the consumer benefit (answer the question, "What's in it for me?") and, secondly, it must do it in a clever, memorable, creative way. A great headline has to do *both* of those things. I tell my students to think of it this way: a headline that states the consumer benefit, but isn't clever and memorable, is still a caterpillar. As a professional writer, you have to turn that caterpillar into a *butterfly*. But how? How do you turn all those caterpillars into beautiful butterflies that will soar off the page? Here are the seven devices that will make your headlines clever, memorable, and *creative*, plus examples for each.

DEVICES THAT MAKE HEADLINES CLEVER

1. **Puns**
   Orange you glad? (Headline for an orange-colored backpack.)
   Say "know" to your students.
2. **Plays on Words**
   Life is short. Drink it up.
   World-class physicians come home to Goshen.
   Drive yourself crazy. (Headline for a car).
   When you're thirsty to win. (A slogan I came up with for Gatorade.)
3. **Juxtapositions**
   It takes a tough man to make a tender chicken. (The famous slogan for Purdue chicken.)
   Thinking small leads to big ideas.
4. **Clichés**
   If you think steak has a lot of protein, you don't know beans.
   Our orthopedics get all the breaks.
   Where more businesses run for cover. (Headline for Traveler's Insurance, which has an umbrella logo.)
   We need bullets like we need a hole in the head. (A headline I came up with to ban bullets as a hazardous substance.)
5. **Similar-Sounding Words (Alliteration)**
   Run, rack, run. (Headline for a car bike rack.)
   Moms matter most.
   Zoom into the zone.
6. **"Play to" (*Confirm*) the Visual**
   In this device, the headline isn't clever in and of itself, but, rather, its cleverness comes from the headline's relationship to its visual—what I call "playing to the visual."

7. **"Play against" (*Contradict*) the Visual**
   As is the case above, this headline is not clever in and of itself, but derives its cleverness from the headline "playing against" its visual.

MORE ON "PLAYING TO" AND "PLAYING AGAINST" THE VISUAL

The first five devices that make headlines clever are pretty self-explanatory. But the last two need further explanation. If you remember, you learned that the first thing a reader sees in a print ad is the visual. That visual says something to the reader, who then goes to the headline for amplification, illustration, illumination, explanation, etc. When the headline *reiterates* or *confirms* what the visual has said, to the reader, then that is an example of a headline that "plays to" the visual. In contrast, a headline that "plays against" the visual is one that *contradicts* what the visual is saying.

Here is an example that will bring this to life. The visual is an underwater shot of a water hazard at a golf course. All we see in the shot is a hand reaching in for a golf ball as a goldfish swims around. An example of a headline that plays to this visual—confirms what the visual is already saying—would be: "Another lousy day on the golf course."

Now, take that exact same visual. An example of a headline that plays against what this visual is saying would be: "Another great day on the golf course." This headline, as opposed to the one that plays to the visual, contradicts what this visual is saying. In golf there is nothing worse than hitting your ball into a water hazard, so the visual is saying "bad," but the headline is saying "good." That contradiction creates what I call a "disconnect." In other words, this ad seems to make no sense and so—given our curious nature as human beings—we want to find out more. So, we have artificially created news value with this disconnect. And, as you learned previously, that's what advertising needs to do in order to attract consumers' attention.

Playing against the visual is a very sophisticated form of advertising that is tough to do, but well worth the effort. With a headline that plays against the visual, it doesn't need to be clever in and of itself. It is its relationship to its visual that creates the cleverness.

Here's another example of this device. Picture a young man in a neck-to-toe body cast lying in a hospital bed, smiling. The headline is: "Another satisfied customer." The visual here says "bad," but the headline says "good." That creates a disconnect in our minds, and we feel compelled to solve it. In this case, the brand is a motorcycle helmet. The message? This helmet will save the one indispensable part of you.

One last example: imagine a bottle of Old Spice body wash on a shower ledge surrounded by soap suds. That visual is saying "clean." Now let's go through the creative process of coming up with a headline that plays against that "clean" visual. If the visual is saying "clean," what's the opposite of clean? Dirty … right. But we need something more. "Get dirty" is not bad. But the word "get" is so ordinary. As a professional writer, you have to scrutinize every word in the headline to make sure it's the very best you can do. We can do better than "get." How about substituting the word "play" for "get"? Now, we've got something—"Play dirty." It's provocative, fun, and plays perfectly against

the visual. Furthermore, consider this: who is the target market for Old Spice body wash? I'd guess it is young men about 18 to 28 years old. They're using Old Spice because it keeps them smelling good and that's desirable to women. Given this target market, our headline is doubly clever because it works on two levels: first, it plays against the visual; second, the "play dirty" implies that Old Spice is some kind of secret weapon that will attract women. It's a wonderful manipulation, considering our young target market (Figure 5.2).

That brings me to a point I want to make about *all* headlines: the more "levels" on which a headline works, the better the headline. If you look back at all seven of the devices, you'll see that each of them in their own way creates at least two levels of meaning and sometimes—depending on the visual, target market, etc.—even three levels. That's good, because it's *interesting, fun, involving, news*! And the target market wants to find out *more*. And that, of course, is the first charge of all advertising—grab the target market's attention. Unless you have the target market's attention, you can't do anything else. Recall my illustration of this vital principle at the beginning of the book. I would have two students come to the front of the class, face each other, and begin conversing. Then I would jump in between them and start talking to them about my brand. That's advertising. Consumers are pursuing their lives, and advertising is always trying to get between them and what they are pursing by saying to them, "We can make you sexier, richer, more comfortable, more lovable, etc., etc." It's *vital* for copywriters to remember that our consumers aren't pursuing us, we are pursuing them. Consumers don't care about our brand or advertising; we have to make them care. We do that by offering them a benefit that answers the question they are all asking themselves upon seeing our advertising—"What's in it for me?" Everything in your advertising, regardless of the medium—the visual, the copy, the music, the actors—should be directed to answering that question.

Old Spice
DIRECTIONS:
Lather, scrub with Active Micro Bead Formula, rinse, feel extremely clean, meet friends, play darts, ricochet, call ambulance, meet nurse, grab burgers, see live music, sneak backstage, meet bouncer, escape headlock, get tattoo, crash wedding, enjoy lobster, tango, propose toast, dodge security, run down alley, twist ankle, slip into club, make new friends, go for waffles, limp home, call nurse, still feel extremely clean, repeat.
RED ZONE
DEEP CLEANSING
ACTIVE MICRO BEAD

Figure 5.2

In conclusion then, every headline needs to do two things: first, it needs to offer the target a clear benefit, and second, it needs to do so in a clever, memorable, creative way. If a headline does not do *both*, then it's not a headline. Most of you will have an easier time with the first than with the second. If you use the devices I've given you here, however, you'll soon be turning caterpillars into beautiful butterflies.

WORDSMITHING THE BODY COPY

In my copywriting classes, I insist students write three paragraphs of body copy for all their print ads. I know print ads seldom have *any* body copy today, let alone three paragraphs. But at this stage of your learning experience, it's essential for you to hone your writing skills, and that can only be done with practice, practice, practice. Only practice makes you perfect. Wordsmithing the body copy is the frustrating and difficult process of actually putting one word after another. You can't think your way into being a good copywriter. You have to *do* it.

Writing, any kind of writing, is a bear! It was tough for Shakespeare. It was tough for Kant. It was tough for Hemingway. And guess what? It's going to be tough for you. So you're in good company. The difficulty and importance of good writing was impressed upon me way back in high school. Brother Coogan was hanging out at our high school while he wrote his dissertation on Sir Thomas Moore's *Utopia*. He once told us that it took him three weeks to write one good sentence. I'm sure he was exaggerating but it worked—I still remember it after all these years.

There are many different types of writing, including journalist writing, technical writing, fiction writing, and what we're concerned with here—copywriting. Like all the types of writing we listed, copywriting has its own special needs and principles. Foremost among these principles is *brevity*. Not only of the copy block itself, but also the sentences contained in it.

Think about all the student essays you've written while you've been in school. Copywriting is the *opposite* of that kind of writing. Those student essays are all about long sentences, long subordinate clauses, semicolons, *big important words*, passive voice, and complex and complicated sentence structures. They are formal, stiff, boring, dull, dull, dull. Did I mention dull?

Copywriting, in contrast, is snappy, punchy, breezy, and conversational. It makes use of short sentences, very short sentences, phrases disguised as sentences, and even single-word sentences. It uses a lot of periods for emphasis and to give the writing a rhythm or cadence. When my students do their wordsmithing, I mandate that none of their sentences contain more than *seven words*. They are shocked. "Am I serious?" Oh, yes. This discipline helps them stop writing like a student and begin writing like a professional. It works for them, and it'll work for you. Student-essay writing just lays there on the page, like a dog turd drying in the hot sun. By contrast, great copywriting *leaps* off the page. It grabs us by the collar and pulls us in, just like the visual and headline. To do that, we need writing that sparkles, persuades, and soars off the page.

But how do you write like that? Here are some tips that will lead to great copywriting. But you need to practice them over and over again. As I wrote in the very beginning of this book, learning to *do* something is much, much tougher than learning *about* something. It takes trial and error, and lots of practice. Your student essay–writing habits will die hard. They're too engrained not to. But if you follow these guidelines, you'll defeat them.

1. Use *action verbs* in your sentences. Action verbs (as opposed to "be" and "is") bring your sentences to *life*.
2. Use the *active voice*, not the passive voice. Passive voice makes for dull sentences that just lay there—yes, like a turd. They don't jump off the page like your sentences should in

copywriting. They are *dead on arrival*. Make sure you know the difference between the passive voice and the active voice; otherwise you don't have a prayer of nailing this one. To be sure, look it up online and study examples of each, even print those examples and have them close at hand while you write.

3. Avoid complex sentences in the grammatical meaning. Use declarative, simple sentences and short compound sentences (those connected by conjunctives such as "and," "but," etc.).
4. Understand the power of the period. In copywriting, punctuation doesn't use us, we use it. A headline in print should have a period, even if it's a phrase or one word. This is the opposite of journalism in which a headline (think of a newspaper headline) never has a period. Furthermore, using periods gives your writing a cadence and rhythm that makes it easier and more fun to read. From the time we are learning to read in preschool, our minds have been trained to *stop* when they see a period. Use this to your advantage in your headline and body-copy writing. As I tell my students, "use lots of periods—they're free."
5. Learn to "turn a phrase." By that I mean to learn to make a point emphatically by juxtaposing adjectives, verbs, and nouns. In my "Devices That Make Headlines Clever" list, under juxtaposition, there's this great example of what I mean: "It takes a tough man to make a tender chicken." Juxtaposing like this makes your writing fun and easy to read, emphatic, and memorable.
6. Read your body copy *out loud* to yourself or to whomever will listen. This will help you get a rhythm into your writing so your body copy really *flows*.
7. Mix up your sentence lengths. Follow a seven-word sentence with a two-word sentence, or even a one-word sentence. Then go back to a longer sentence, and so forth. This technique gives writing a rhythm and cadence that keeps the readers reading.
8. Use adjectives sparingly and make sure they are *different* adjectives than are normally used to describe that noun. For example: sturdy shock absorbers. The adjective "sturdy" is so often used to modify shock absorbers that it no longer communicates anything. Come up with *unexpected* adjectives to modify your nouns. Adjectives that will *shock* your readers out of their complacency.
9. Because copywriting should be conversational, use the second person. This means using the word "you" often. For example: "You'll love the way Tide fluffs clothes." This warms up your copy and also helps create the illusion that you are speaking to only *one* of your consumers at a time. You can also use the plural first person in your body copy when you are "speaking" for your client's brand or company. For example: "At Apple, we believe in empowering our users." Avoid the third person in copywriting because it comes off as really cold. Third person is more appropriate for proposal types of writing that an account manager might do.
10. Don't write. *Rewrite*. All great writers got great by rewriting. Period. Writing of any kind is hard, time-consuming work. There is no substitute for care, time, and rewriting. Just as I am doing right now!
11. When you're writing, envision *one* consumer in your target market instead of a whole bunch of them—"the faceless masses." Write as if you were talking with that one person over coffee or dinner. This tip will help make your copy conversational—a quick, easy, fun read.

Finally, here is one last tip. It's not on writing, but on reading. *Read good writing*. When you read good writing, your brain—through some kind of osmosis—absorbs the vocabulary, sentence structure, paragraphing, and organization. You will learn to write well every time you read something that is written well. That means reading well-written fiction and nonfiction, and publications such as the *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *Harpers*, etc. Look at it this way: if you're going to read, you may as well read the best.

THE THREE-PARAGRAPH RULE IN BODY COPY

Think of the body copy as a *miniature persuasive essay*. As I've said before, only 20 percent of the consumers who see your ad will read the body copy. But those 20 percent are the most likely to buy what you're selling. So you have to seal the deal. And the way to do that is with persuasive writing. The "three-paragraph rule" helps you practice your persuasive writing skills. But why three paragraphs? The first reason is because the number three is the most magic of all numbers—not too few, not too many, but just right. Secondly, the most important things I want you to practice just happen to number three. Each of the three paragraphs has a particular purpose. So here we go.

In the first paragraph, we repeat the headline. You can literally repeat it or write a slightly different version of it. The reason is because the headline contains the most important copy in the ad—the brand's promise to the consumer stated in a clever, memorable, creative way—and, therefore bears repeating. Repetition in advertising is never a bad thing.

In the second paragraph, we back up that promise to the consumer with proof. Here's how the progression works: the visuals have caught our consumer's attention and the headline has made a promise that *begins* to answer the question every consumer is asking upon seeing an ad—"What's in it for me?" Now, through our persuasive writing skills, we have to pull out the facts that prove the promise we have made to our consumer. Not all facts are created equal. Facts that come from objective third-party sources are the most persuasive. Third-party facts that prove the consumer benefit promise we have made in our headline come from those who have no vested interest in promoting our brand. Our consumer will believe these facts because they are objective. Here are some examples:

1. If we are selling a brand of wine, what objective wine critics have said about our brand is far more persuasive than anything we can say about it. Why? Because *this is an ad*, and, therefore, every reader knows that we are not going to say anything bad about our brand. In other words, we are only going to present one side of the story—the good side. With third-party facts, however, consumers know that the third party has no reason to say good things about our brand if they were not *true*. So these facts carry far more weight than any claim we could make. If *The Wine Magazine* ranked our cabernet as one of the top 10 of that year, that fact is going to carry enormous persuasive power. These objective facts are *super facts* and should be used wherever and whenever you can. Where do you find these facts? Where you find everything else—on the Internet. Because of the Internet, the world is literally at your fingertips. So use it. Dig. Dig.

Dig. Find out as much about your brand and your brand's competitors as you possibly can. These third-party facts give you the ammunition you need to persuade and close the deal in the second paragraph. You want to fill this paragraph with as many of these objective "testimonials" as possible because they are the gold standard of persuasion.

A notch below these third-party testimonials is testimonials from "satisfied customers." Sometimes these are based on hardcore statistical studies. For example: "In independent studies, 8 out of 10 consumers preferred brand XYZ." Other times, there are no hardcore statistics, but this tool can still be persuasively used by quoting just one or two satisfied customers, thereby creating the *illusion* of a stampede of positive consumer feelings. Here's an example: "Our Sealy mattress eliminated my back problems." That's only one consumer, but it *implies* that many others feel the same.

2. Cite the fact that your brand is number one in its product category. This persuasive tool is as old as advertising itself. It plays on the powerful persuasive logic of "that many people can't be wrong." If that many consumers prefer that brand, I probably will, too.
3. Cite how long your brand has been satisfying consumers. If your brand has been in business since 1911, that carries a lot of credibility with consumers. Similar to number two, the logic is that a brand that's been around for a hundred years *must* be good.
4. Cite the secret formula, ingredient, device, etc. that makes your brand different from the others. When we put a name on the active ingredient in our brand, it gives credibility to the promise we made to our consumers in the headline. The client might already have a name for this, so naturally you'd have to use it. Otherwise, press your client to allow you to name the formula, ingredient, or whatever. "Clorox Bleach, now with its new XYZ formula, fights stains like never before."
5. Make competitive claims. If you can make a claim for your brand at the expense of its number-one competitor in the product category, do it! This is second only to objective third-party facts, and is often used with them. For example, one of the ads my students have to write body copy for is for Clorox Bleach. The ad shows how much better Clorox works than OxiClean in getting white socks whiter. When you make a strong claim like this, however, you must *prove* it. That proof can be with "independent tests," "consumer usage studies," etc. The stronger the claim for your brand—especially if it's at the expense of your main competitor—the stronger your proof needs to be.
6. Tie the features of your brand to the benefits of your brand. The one-two punch of a product feature tied to a consumer benefit is a powerful persuasive tool. Here are three examples:

   Feature: Nestle chocolate chips are made with pure milk chocolate …
   Benefit: so your chocolate-chip cookies always taste deliciously rich.
   Feature: The Daisy Shaver has a curved head …
   Benefit: so you can see around all the nooks and crannies of your knees and ankles.
   Feature: United Airlines flies 15 nonstops a day from Chicago to New York …
   Benefit: so we're always on your schedule.

The reason this is such a powerful technique goes back to one of our original premises—consumers upon seeing an ad are always asking themselves, "What's in it for me?" The feature-benefit, one-two punch answers that question immediately by tying brand features to benefits that consumers want.

7. Use "legal weasels." Lawyers often object to claims copywriters make in their ads, regardless of the medium. There are ways around this, and the simplest one is to just make the claim visually. You can see the three ads we did for the Gatorade campaign that first positioned Gatorade as a sports drink in figures 5.3-5.5.

   The lawyers had no problem with the headline for the football player. But they had a big problem with my original headline for the tennis player—"It Makes the Difference." I'm really making the same claim in the football ad, but its visual allusion to the lightning bolt allowed it to escape the lawyers' wrath. Here's the evolution of the headline on the tennis ad: "It Makes a Difference"; "It Can Make a Difference"; "It Could Make a Difference." Notice the steady stream of qualifiers. Furthermore, the lawyers picked over my body copy hundreds of times, but never once raised an objection to the lightning bolt striking the body—a clear claim of "energy in a bottle." That's what I mean by using visuals to make your claims instead of words. Lawyers are trained to scrutinize words, not visuals.

   As I demonstrated in the tennis ad, lawyers will seldom allow you to make an outright claim for your brand. They really, really like qualifiers. So, as a copywriter, your client still expects you to make strong claims for the brand, but you have to do it in a way the lawyers will approve. Consider this headline for a Cheerios ad: "The only leading cold cereal that helps lower cholesterol." Let's examine the "legal weasels" in that headline. First, *all* oat cereals lower cholesterol, not just Cheerios. But because Cheerios is the *leader* among oat-based cereals, the claim is technically correct. The second legal weasel is the use of "cold cereal." Quaker Oats oatmeal is *also* a leading cereal that lowers cholesterol, but it's a *hot cereal*. The third legal weasel is the word "helps." This is the king of all the qualifiers. The one single word lawyers love most. Fortunately, for copywriters, consumers have seen this word so often that it doesn't even register with them anymore. Plus, as I said earlier in the book, consumers want easy, quick answers to their problems, so consumers actually *want* to believe that our claims are true. In this case, they *want* the easy, quick answer to their cholesterol problem, so they often mentally disregard qualifying words like "helps."

Those are the seven major ways to be persuasive in paragraph two. Obviously, your persuasive techniques will differ depending on the brand. The way you write for Clorox will be very different from the way you write for Dove chocolate bars. But the principles outlined here still hold true.

PARAGRAPH TWO AND PUFFERY

As we explored in number seven, lawyers often force qualifiers on us. And sometimes those qualifiers are so strong or numerous that our claims become mere puffery. This is a word you might not have

CATCH SOME
OF OUR LIGHTNING.
One on one, in the burning sun. You and a cornerback, step for step. A lot of heat. Sweat. Thirst. But the job has got to get done. That's when Gatorade® could make a difference. Developed under playing conditions at a major Southern university, Gatorade® thirst quencher is specifically designed to help replace salts and fluids you sweat away. To help restore your body's fluid and electrolyte balance. Before you get that burned-out feeling. After all, your moves could make
Gatorade
WHEN YOU'RE THIRSTY
TO WIN.

Figure 5.3

IT COULD
MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
It's hot. And you're wringing wet and dripping sweat with every swing. The thirst in your mouth has spread through your body. But you want to keep playing. Gatorade® could make a difference. Gatorade® thirst quencher is specifically designed to do things ordinary soft drinks and juices just don't do – to help replace salts and fluids you sweat away, and help restore your body's fluid and electrolyte balance. Before you get that burned-out feeling. Before you
Gatorade
WHEN YOU'RE THIRSTY

Figure 5.4

HAVE YOU GOT
WHAT IT TAKES?
You're on a soccer field, but it feels more like a desert. Sun. Heat. Sweat. Thirst. But you want to keep playing. That's when Gatorade® is at its best. Because Gatorade® is specifically formulated to help replace salts and fluids you sweat away. To help restore your body's fluid and electrolyte balance. It gives your body what it's thirsty for before you get that burned-out feeling. A combination no soft drink can match. Or juice. Or water. Gatorade® thirst
Gatorade
WHEN YOU'RE THIRSTY

Figure 5.5

heard of—"puffery." Puffery is actually a legal term that excuses certain advertising claims as harmless because they are so outlandish that the courts hold that no consumer would ever believe them. The example that always comes to mind for me is: "Nobody does it better." On its surface that sounds like a very powerful claim, but looking at it closer reveals that it's mere puffery. "Nobody does it better." Okay. But the implication is also that "nobody does it *worse*." So, where does that leave our brand? Nowhere. Let's go back to Reeves, whose USP strategic theory we examined earlier in this book. Reeves hated puffery. Puffery to him was a waste of the client's money because it fooled no one, and proved nothing. That's why facts are so important in paragraph two. Claims in paragraph two without the facts to support them are mere *puffery*. And your consumer won't believe a word of them. So the opportunity you had to prove your headline's brand promise to the consumer is lost—and so is the sale. As a result, copywriters tread a very fine line between pleasing the lawyers and still making claims that are relevant to their consumers.

I've spent so much space on paragraph two that you might have thought I forgot about paragraph three. What do we do there? Well, believe it or not, we repeat the headline again. The reason for this is the same as it was in the first paragraph; because the headline is the most important copy in our ad, it cannot be repeated too often. As I said, it doesn't have to be a literal repeat of the headline, but something close. Furthermore, repeating the headline in paragraph three also gives your reader a sense of having come full circle. Think back to all the stories you've read, going as far back as children's stories; they close by bringing the story full circle—coming back to where we started. In a sense, your ad is a story, too, and this brings it full circle. Once we have done that, it's also a good idea to tell your consumer what he or she needs to do *next*. That's what we term the **call-to-action**. If you always pretend as if you're talking with one consumer at a time in your body copy, think of this as a response any interested customer would voice: "How and where do I get what you're selling me?" The call-to-action could be any number of things: sending consumers to the website, encouraging them to call an 800-number, or asking them to go to a particular retailer. But the one that's getting to be the most popular is the QR code. Because nearly everyone now has a smartphone, the QR code enables you to give your consumers lots more specific information instantly. You might even use more than one call-to-action. Regardless of which you use, the important thing is to *spur* your consumer into *action*. Remember our fishing analogy. We've got a live one here, and we have to reel it in.

BODY COPY LENGTH

I've already said that it's unusual for print ads today to have any body copy, let alone three paragraphs. But, remember, you are just learning, so you need this exercise to hone your copywriting skills (Figure 5.6). In the first and third paragraphs, I'd just repeat the headline and put in nothing else. This focuses the reader completely on your consumer benefit promise that you are repeating from the headline. We don't want anything to distract from that most important piece of communication.

Then, in the second paragraph, I'd put everything else—all your facts that prove that your consumer benefit promise is true. I'd keep it to about 75 words. So your entire body-copy block should be about 100 words. When you're putting together your book (your portfolio of speculative advertising campaigns you need to show to get a job), I think it's important to demonstrate your wordsmithing skills. So, while the three-paragraph rule starts as an exercise, it should become a discipline that showcases your ability to write persuasive copy that sells. Plus, as you learned in the first chapter, advertising is just one form of marketing communications and many of those other forms require more wordsmithing than print ads do. Examples would be websites, collateral pieces (brochures, products sheets, etc.), direct-mail pieces, events, and even sales promotion. As much as I hope you become an advertising copywriter, you could have a very nice career as a copywriter in any one of these other forms of marketing communications. If that winds up being your career path, then your book will have to demonstrate that you are the Michelangelo of wordsmiths.

The "Three-Paragraph Rule"

Paragraph #1: Restate your headline exactly or in a slightly different way.

Paragraph #2: The headline of your ad is a benefit PROMISE to your target market. In paragraph #2, you need to "prove" and offer details, objective third-party testimonials and facts that SUPPORT the PROMISE you made in your headline. Go online and DIG. Find out facts. Third-person, objective endorsements and/or testimonials carry lots of weight because your target market will see them as objective and "true."

Paragraph #3: Restate your headline AGAIN (or a slight variation of it). Then let the target market know what you want them to do next – your call-to-action. Because of the smartphone, a QR code is often a print-ad's call-to-action. But you also can direct the target maket to call a toll-free phone number, go to a website, or visit one or more specific retailers. If your need to, you can do ALL of these.

Figure 5.6

LIMBERING UP

This book, like all others, has its limitations as a teaching tool. Students in my copywriting classes do as many as 15 different campaigns and 10 or more "limbering up" exercises, like the ones that follow. Then I go through their work, comment on it, make suggestions, and they redo

it—over and over. Our relationship is a lot like a lively game of ping pong. This give and take is essential to learning how to be copywriter. But it's sadly beyond the scope of this book. The assignments that follow, however, will get you on the right track and give you plenty of practice. Just as you would warm up before jumping into your exercise routine, it's worthwhile for you to warm up before doing your first campaigns. All of the campaign assignments, which are called "creative briefs" in the business, are presented in Chapter 14. They cover all the media we discuss and will help you build your portfolio, or book, so you can actually interview for copywriting positions. In preparation for that, at the end of each section on writing for a particular medium, I'll include assignments that limber up your creative thinking and copywriting skills.

The best way to limber up for print is to address the three key parts of a magazine print ad, just as we have gone over them—headline, visual, body copy. I think it's best that we go with the headline exercise first, even though we agree that the visual in a print ad is by far the most important of the three elements. The reason is that this gives you the chance to use preexisting visuals and, thereby, hone your skills in recognizing a great visual when you see one. Also, although thinking of unexpected, unusual visuals is not easy, it is more creatively spontaneous than writing headlines. Headlines—and wordsmithing in general—requires more of an equal effort from our right and left brains (the right being the creative side and the left being the more linear, analytical side).

LIMBERING-UP EXERCISE #1: HEADLINES

Find several full-page, four-color magazine ads that have unexpected and unusual visuals. Don't overthink this. Trust your gut; the ad either grabs you or it doesn't. Pick the ones that do. Breeze through many kinds of magazines—everything from sports to lifestyle to homemaking to cooking. "Shelter" magazines such as *Good Housekeeping*, *Family Circle*, *Better Homes & Gardens*, and similar magazines are particularly good choices.

If you own the magazines, tear the ads out and build a pile of 20 or so. If you don't own the magazines, just photocopy the ads you want to use. It's important that you choose strong ads. Those are ads that are simple, single-mindedly focused on the consumer benefit, and visually compelling. Plus, and this is key, it's also useful to choose ads that have headlines that are weak. The reason, of course, is that in this assignment you're going to think of headlines that are much, much better.

When you have your 20 or so ads, use "sticky" notes to cover all the headlines. Do this to *all* of them at once. Then let them sit for a week, long enough for you to forget the original headlines. Now you're ready to jump in.

Assuming *everything* else in each ad remains the same, write down what you think the ad's consumer benefit promise is. I encouraged students to use the following syntax because it really brings home the point that this is the brand's promise to its consumers. "XYZ gives you _____." What? For example, "Kraft gives you a whole new way to eat mac and cheese." That's what you need: a statement that's short, simple, and declarative. If your sentence is long

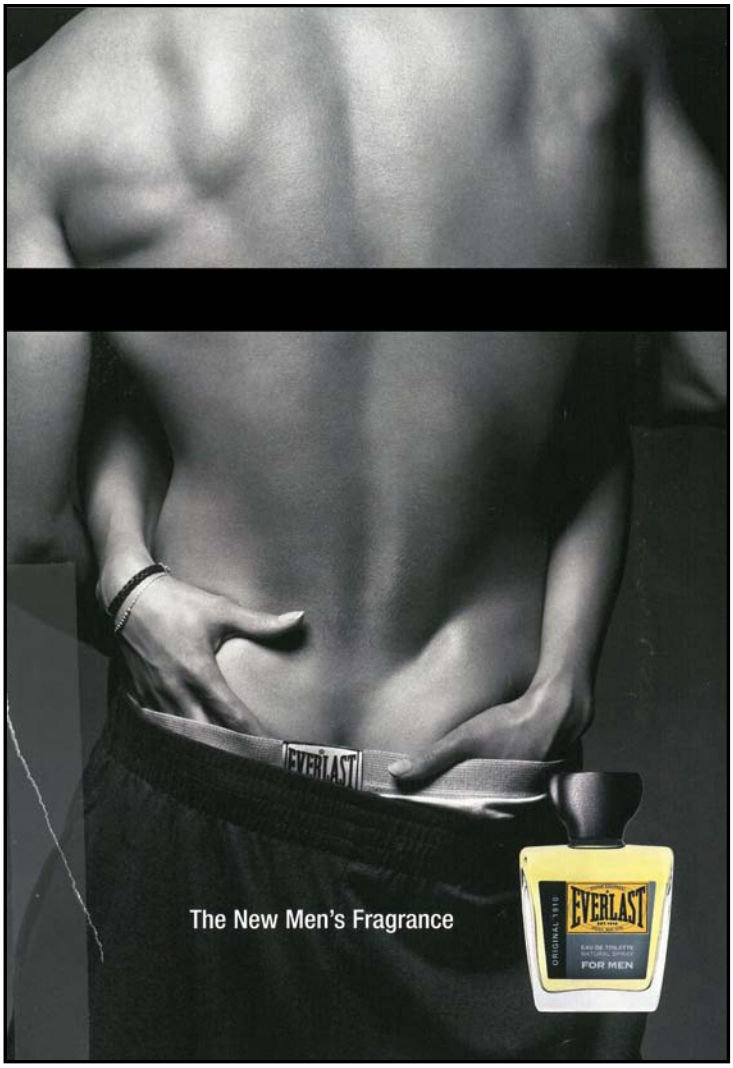


Figure 5.7

and rambling, you don't have a handle on the promise. Keep reworking the benefit promise until you do. That statement, then, becomes the brand's benefit promise that must be included in your headline, and turned into a butterfly.

Once you have your consumer benefit promise, look over the list I gave you on how to make headlines clever. This exercise will be much more productive if you come up with headlines that exhibit all seven of the devices. Already having the visuals is a huge advantage, because, as I have said, the visual delivers 90 percent of the ad's effectiveness. If you've chosen your ads wisely, these strong visuals will make it much easier to write strong headlines. First, examine the visual in your ad and look for clues that you can play off of in your headlines. Here are a few examples of ads I use in my classes.

Let's start with the Everlast ad. I've covered the headline, so we can analyze some headline choices together. I've done the same thing in the Crown Royal ad that's on the next page. Now, in this case, Everlast is a big clue as to where we can go with the headline. What does the brand Everlast bring to mind? Boxing. This brand name has been on boxing gloves, boxing shorts, and boxing rings for nearly a century. So, given that boxing heritage, boxing analogies for our headline make perfect sense. Here are a few possibilities: "When you're going for the knockout," "Down for the count," "Get in the ring," "Round one." Which one would you choose? My favorite is "Round one." Here's why. Foremost, it works on a number of levels, and you'll remember I said earlier that makes for a clever and compelling headline. The first level is the allusion to the rounds of a boxing match. The second level is that this is a "love match," and "Round one" promises even better things to come. Thirdly, this is a headline that interacts very well with its visual. So, which device does "Round one" use to be clever and memorable? I'd say it plays to the visual. The visual of the woman grabbing the guy's backside says passion. The headline, "Round one," cleverly confirms what the visual is telling us and at the same time

adds a very clever allusion to Everlast's boxing heritage. Bingo! We've got a winning headline, particularly considering the young male target market and what they want from a cologne. Now, let's have some fun and throw a twist in there. Let's assume everything in the ad is the same, including the headline we chose. Would that headline still be clever if the brand of men's cologne was Prada, Nautica, or Polo? Of course not. Why? Well, because it no longer works on so many levels. Because those other brands of cologne don't have a boxing heritage, "Round one" is a great headline only if the brand is Everlast cologne. The moral: the headline not only has a special relationship with its visual, but also with its brand.

Crown Royal
It's about quality, not quantity. • Visit crownroyal.com
CROWN ROYAL • IMPORTED IN THE BOTTLE • BLENDED CANADIAN WHISKY • 40% ALCOHOL BY VOLUME (80 PROOF) • ©2004 THE CROWN ROYAL COMPANY, STAMFORD, CT

Figure 5.8

Here's another example I like to give the students (Figure 5.8). There's a photo of a Crown Royal bottle of whiskey shattered on the floor. What's the headline? Well, first of all, you have a great unexpected visual to play off of. You never see the client's brand spilled out on the ground and the bottle in hundreds of pieces. As a result, we're compelled to find out more. Now, let's go back to the headline. Of our seven devices that make headlines clever, which can we use here? Do you have an opportunity for a pun, a cliché, or playing to the visual like we did with the Everlast ad? Work through the seven devices and see how many you can use in thinking of a headline for this ad. Okay, now I'll give you the headline that was actually in the ad: "Ever see a grown man cry?" I would say this is, once again, a headline that plays to the visual. The visual is saying this is "bad" and the headline confirms that and reiterates it. Furthermore, this is a great example of the writer understanding his or her target consumer. Those who drink Crown Royal are fanatical about that brand. They consider it a sign of their status, of their having "arrived." That headline makes maximum manipulative use of all the emotions the target market attaches to that brand.

Before we move on to the next assignment, note that the point of this limbering up exercise is just that—exercise. Because you already have the visuals in the ads, you can isolate the headline component and practice all of the devices that make headlines clever. If possible, for

each of your ads force yourself to come up with at least one headline from each of the seven devices that make headlines clever. This is great practice and drives home the special relationship between a headline and its visual. In my classes, I also insist that the students identify which of the headlines they think is their best. This encourages them to edit their own work and distinguish great work from mediocre work. Sometimes I agree with the student's choice, and other times I don't. I might like one of their other headlines better or not like any of them. If that's the case, they have to do the assignment over. I can't force you to do the same. But I encourage you to force yourself. Practice is essential here, as it is in learning any skill. Because you're not in my class, you have to apply the discipline this exercise demands. Otherwise, you won't see the results. "No pain, no gain."

LIMBERING-UP EXERCISE #2: VISUALS

Now, just as we isolated the headline component in the first limbering-up exercise, we will now isolate the visual. Choose about 20 magazine ads and come up with new visuals for them. Leave everything else in the ads the same. Choose ads that have visuals that you think are weak—boring, expected, ordinary. Those are your paradigms that you need to flip, just as I demonstrated earlier with the conference room example. Before you start this exercise, go back and remind yourself of what makes for a compelling visual. A compelling visual is unusual, unexpected, and has news value. Refresh your memory as to how we took that boring conference room visual and transformed it into several unexpected, compelling, and memorable visuals. Once you isolate the paradigm visual, it's easy and fun to turn it into a visual that begs to be explored, instead of ignored.

LIMBERING-UP EXERCISE #3: THE BODY COPY

The last exercise entails writing body copy. As before, choose about 20 magazine ads. Choose ads that have little or no body copy. This allows you to start fresh without being influenced by what's already there. With the headline and visual being the same, follow the three-paragraph rule and write body copy for all 20 ads. To refresh your memory, go back over the section on writing good advertising copy and the requirements of the three-paragraph rule. In my classes, I had a few favorite ads that I gave the students. I've included them here to get you started. The brands and product categories in the ads are all very different from each other. You should do the same. It's important that you practice writing copy for lots of different kinds of brands and products. For example, I would give the students the following ads: one ad was for Clorox, and it compared itself to OxiClean and how much better it got white socks their whitest (Figure 5.9). Then, I would switch things up and give them an ad for Hershey Kisses (Figure 5.10) that celebrated the Fourth of July with the headline "Red, White, and Delicious." Then, I'll include a Subaru ad that just had the headline "Dear Subaru," with the students then having to take it from there. The reason this variety is so important to this exercise is because the body copy you're going to write

for a head-to-head comparative ad for Clorox is going to be very different than what you write for a delicious chocolate candy, and, in turn, very different than that for an automobile. Variety hones your wordsmithing skills and perfects your persuasive skill. Remember, it is paragraph two in which you lay out your facts that prove the consumer benefit promise that's in the headline. The facts you come up with are going to be vastly different from Clorox to Kisses to Subaru. And that gives you the practice you need to become an excellent wordsmith—and demonstrate it in your portfolio of spec samples.

Figure 5.9

To get you started, let's go over the three ads individually and apply the three-paragraph rule.

Clorox: this comparison headline is a non-traditional one, so we need to capture the thought in paragraph one, but in a more clever way. How about: Clorox knocks the socks out to OxiClean? That certainly verbalizes the claim we are seeing in the visual and its captions. Now, we need to "prove" that claim in paragraph one in paragraph two. I won't actually write it for you, but here are a few impressive facts: Clorox has been whitening whites for over a century. Clorox kills 99% of all bacteria on those dirty socks. Clorox helps keep your children germ-free and healthy because it is so effective at killing bacteria. Then, in paragraph three, we repeat what we have in paragraph one, maybe with a slight variation: No wonder Clorox beats the socks out of OxiClean every time.

The Hershey ad is a very different writing challenge. It's not a comparison and chocolate doesn't actually do something for the consumer like Clorox cleans soiled socks. Yet it does, emotionally. In the Hershey ad we have a more traditional headline, so we repeat it in paragraph one with a slight addition: Red, white and delicious since 1914. In paragraph two, we "prove" this claim , but in a different way than in the Clorox example. Here, we want to cite facts, but in a very different way: For over a century, through two World Wars, Hershey Kisses have been the great American treat. As an American patriot, Hershey stopped wrapping Kisses in aluminum and

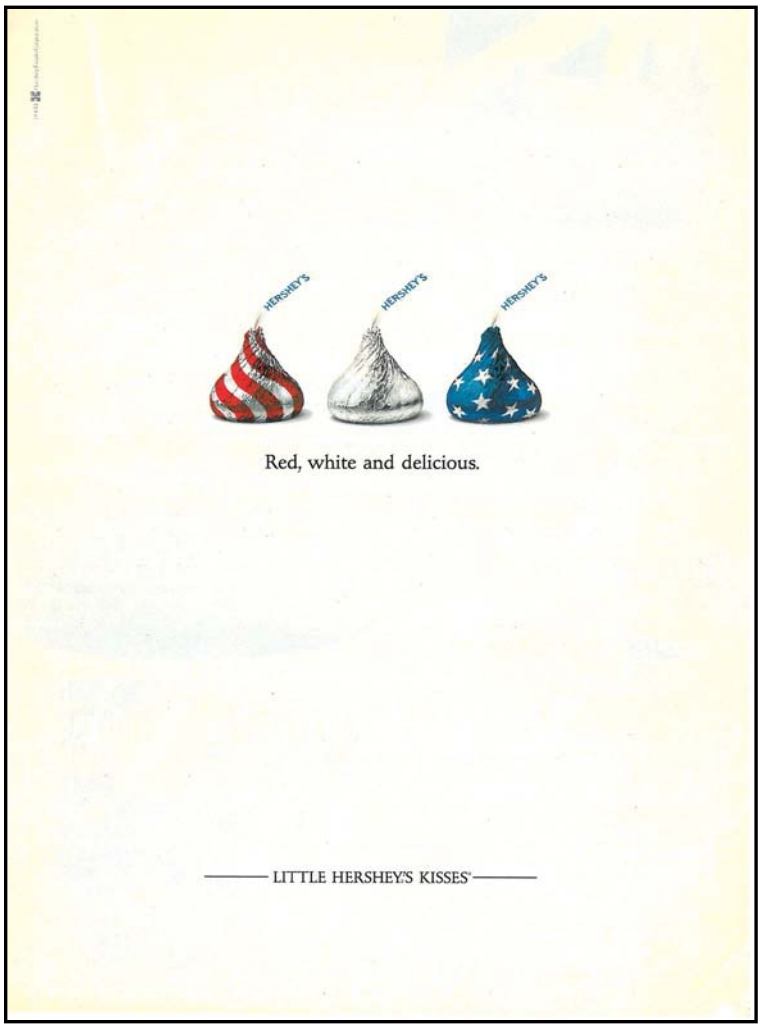


Figure 5.10

donated it to winning World War II. On America's birthday, what could be more patriotic than celebrating with "America's chocolate." Then, in paragraph three, we repeat the headline with a slight variation: This holiday, hooray for red, white and delicious.

Now, let's work through the Subaru ad. This body copy can go in a lot of directions, but let's make it a love letter. Paragraph one: Dear Subaru, you're family. Paragraph two: Your all-wheel-drive and incredible reliability has won our hearts. You're so easy to get along with. Whether we're going around the corner or around the country, you're so much fun. We feel so safe with you. Thank you for being you. Paragraph three: Dearest Subaru, welcome to the family.

Here is another body-copy exercise I give my students. "I'm going to choose *one* fruit to eat for the rest of my life: oranges, bananas, or apples. Following the three-paragraph rule, convince me that your fruit is the one I should choose." Below are the headlines I suggest, but you can come up others. There must be three paragraphs, and each must accomplish its mission, as set out in the three-paragraph rule. Your three paragraphs should have about 100 words total, and about 75 should be in paragraph two, where you prove the headline's brand promise. To hone your wordsmithing skills, I'd do all three. Then, when the time comes, you might want to include them in your portfolio. They make a powerful statement about your persuasive writing skills because you are making a different persuasive argument for each fruit. Here are the headlines:

- Oranges: Orange You Glad?
- Bananas: Bananas Are Bitchin'.
- Apples: The Apple of Your Eye.

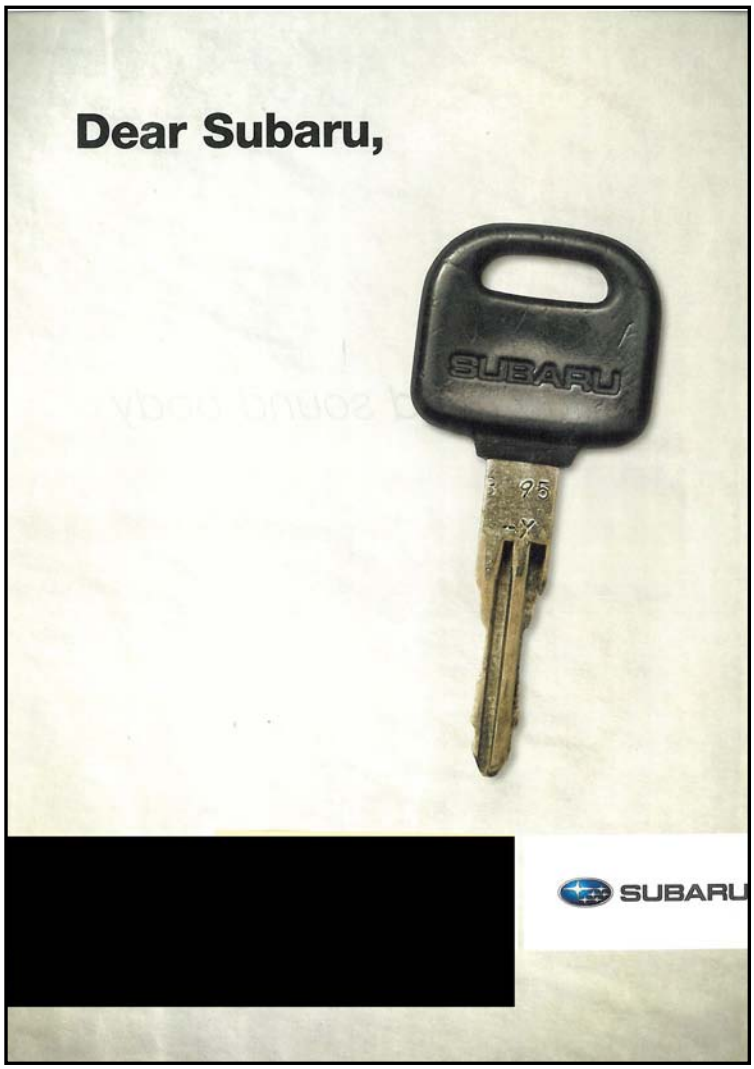


Figure 5.11

Chapter Six

Wordsmithing in Radio

Now, it's time to move into broadcast—radio and TV.

Internet music sites such as Pandora and Spotify have given new life to radio. Before the advent of the Internet, broadcast radio was *the* medium to reach the highly desirable 12- to 24-year-olds because that's where they went to listen to music. Now they mostly listen to music online, at sites such as Pandora and Spotify. So advertisers have followed. Unlike traditional radio, however, Internet radio has a visual as well as an audio component. So it can handle TV commercials, as well as audio-only commercials. We'll leave the discussion of TV commercials to the next chapter. In this chapter, we'll focus on audio-only commercials, which could run on the Internet or broadcast or satellite radio. For the rest of the chapter, I'll refer to these audio-only commercials as simply radio commercials.

I start with radio instead of TV because it's great preparation for doing TV. Plus, I think radio is the most difficult medium in which to do good work. The reason is that radio—like all great advertising—needs to be visual, yet you don't have any visuals to work with. Or do you? In radio you have to create a "theater of the mind" in which your sound effects, voices, and music conjure up the visuals in your mind. In other words, you don't see them with your eyes, but in your mind's eye. Great radio has everything to do with conjuring up these imaginary visuals and very little to do with talk, talk, talk. In fact, if you think of all the horrible radio ads you've heard, they have one thing in common—they're *all* talk. And they talk *at* you rather than *with* you. We've all had similar experiences is real life. A nonstop talker latches on to you at a party and won't let you get a word in. That's how bad radio feels to your consumers. They feel assaulted. Bad radio doesn't create a visual setting, and it doesn't conjure any visuals in our mind's eye. It just talks at us. As a result, we switch the station and run away!

If that's bad radio, then what's good radio? Good radio—like all great advertising—grabs you by the collar, pulls you in, and doesn't let you go until you've heard its message. But how do you do that in radio? Simply put, you do it with sound effects. Sound effects fill out the radio spot and give it its reality in our mind's eye. In fact, I would follow this simple principle: the fewer

words you use in your radio spots, the better your radio spots will be. Bad radio is talky, preachy, and tiresome. How do you avoid that? You avoid it by *showing* me instead of *telling* me. To understand what I mean, start by listening to some award-winning radio spots. A perfect place to do that is at the Siren Awards website. If you search "Siren Awards" on Google, you'll find a long list of the various award years. You can play the radio spots right on the website, and many of the international spots have been translated into English. I think you'll see that it's the sound effects, unusual voices, special effects, and music that make these spots stand out.

The nice thing about learning to do advertising is that advertising pervades our lives. It's everywhere. So it's very easy to study, analyze, and learn from. You can learn from great work, but sometimes you can learn even more from horrible work! I always tell my students to keep their "student hats" on when they see or hear advertising. You have to resist regressing back to being a *consumer* of advertising and force yourself to always be a *student* of advertising. That's a great way to learn your craft, and it's free!

WHERE TO START?

When you write broadcast, you're in the entertainment business, whether you like it or not. Because your radio and TV spots are sandwiched between entertainment, they *must entertain*. That doesn't mean they can't persuade. It just means that your consumers are listening or watching to entertain themselves (even most news programs), and they expect your advertising to continue to entertain them. This entertainment can be in the form of humor, drama, horror, real-person testimonials, etc. Your consumers don't want to be preached to, talked down to, talked to death, or bullied. Consumers "just wanna have fun"! And if you don't supply it to them, they'll find someone else who will. So, if you ever wanted to be a standup comic, a cartoonist, a playwright, screenwriter, comedy writer, talent scout, lyricist, or musician, now's your chance! All disguised as advertising. And, often, what's happening in the entertainment arts becomes the actual source of your advertising entertainment. Writing broadcast requires you to dig much deeper into yourself than writing print. You need to draw on all the life experiences that could be relevant to your ad, as well as all the entertainment that has made you laugh, cry, scream, etc. Then you have to use it all to pull in your consumers and keep them there until they've heard your message.

WRITING FOR THE EAR

It might be obvious, but it's such an important distinction that I think I'll risk it. When you write a print ad, you are writing for the eyes. When you write for radio or TV, you are writing for the ears. Of course, a TV commercial has visuals, but other than titles, all of the writing will be heard, not read. This distinction puts you on notice that your writing style needs to shift when you move from print to broadcast. Your consumer is used to reading in full sentences, but not

hearing in full sentences. People don't talk in full sentences. In fact, they sometimes don't even talk with words. That's right. They make sounds that have very specific meanings like words, but aren't words. Here are just a few examples: "Uh huh" "Hmmm," "Whoa," "Mmmmm," "Awwww," "Grrrr." Okay, you get the idea. That's the way consumers really "talk," so you have to "talk" that way in your radio and TV spots. My opinion is that these sounds are primal and go way back to before humans had more refined language skills. Their primal nature makes them very powerful and effective as ad copy. Plus, using them to write radio and TV gives your dialogue a natural and authentic quality that real words just can't duplicate.

How do you get good at writing for the ear? Well, one great way is to listen to how people actually talk. Eavesdrop on conversations and then try to duplicate what is said on paper. You'll find it's a lot tougher than you might think. Another great exercise is to write down all the advice, adages, warnings, and tips our parents, grandparents, siblings, teachers, friends, and enemies have given us. My parents are long gone, but I hear their voices in my head as if they were sitting across from me at this computer. I'm sure the same is true of you. The important people in our lives continue to speak to us even if they are not actually with us. Write down what you hear from these important folks. All of us have a certain way of speaking. Try to recreate that syntax and cadence on paper. It's a great discipline and very instructive in writing realistic and compelling dialogue.

As I said above, no one speaks in full sentences. If you try to write broadcast with full sentences, your dialogue will sound stilted. When I say dialogue, I'm not just talking about the actual words between or among people in the radio or TV spot, I'm also referring to the announcer, who is usually talking directly to the consumer, rather than another character in the commercial. Furthermore, the great majority of the TV commercials have the announcer talking *over the visual*, so we don't ever see him or her in the commercial. This is called a voiceover announcer. Even though the announcer is not exchanging dialogue with another character in the commercial, the announcer *is* exchanging dialogue with the consumers who are listening. Yes, of course, those consumers are unseen by the announcer and they don't actually talk back out loud (usually), but they do talk back *mentally*. You have to remember that when you are writing for broadcast. You have to keep your writing—even if it is only one person talking—conversational. Your dialogue should be all of the following: bright, breezy, banter-like, fun, colloquial, short, and natural. Your dialogue should *never* be all of the following: full sentences, long sentences or phrases, complicated sentences, stilted, stiff, unnatural, unrealistic, cumbersome, dull, old-fashioned. Got all that. Your writing for broadcast should sound like people talk. As with all other forms of copywriting, that will take practice to make perfect.

MORE ON CHARACTERS SPEAKING TO EACH OTHER

Although most radio and TV commercials use an announcer talking directly with the consumer, often there are characters in the radio or TV ads who are talking with *each other*. This is dialogue writing, too, but of a different stripe. And harder. When you have characters talking with each

other, be sure they are *characters* and not just *voices*. In other words, even though your spot is only 30 or 60 seconds, the characters in the commercials should have a real personality about them, just as if you were writing a screenplay, play, or other form of entertainment. If you look upon them as *characters* rather than just different voices, they will talk much more naturally and register with the consumer as real people—just like them.

RADIO SCRIPT FORMAT

Learning the accepted format for a radio script identifies you as a professional and also serves to frame your thinking and creativity. The objective of a radio script is to take what's in your mind's eye and install it in your consumer's mind's eye. You do that with a properly formatted script. I've included an example of a radio script in this section (Figure 6.1). This format is not negotiable. Follow it exactly. Some terms need explaining. SFX is a film term that means "fixed on film." In the case of a radio script, because there *is* no film, its purpose is to denote a sound effect. Notice that a sound effect is always in caps and underlined. This serves to make it stand out in the script so the studio engineer knows where to lay in the effects. You'll also notice that the talent is also in caps. This makes the name, or description of the talent, stand out from the actual dialogue. In terms of music, I would handle it as you would a sound effect, but without the SFX. So if it's just instrumental music, I'd just put MUSIC on the far left instead of SFX and then use all caps and underline, just as you do for sound effects. If you have a jingle, just put MUSIC AND LYRICS to the far left and then write the lyrics in stanzas as you would a poem in upper and lower case. Also, dialogue, whether it be announcer or interchange between characters, is always upper and lower case. Everything is done for one reason—to make it clear to everyone who is involved what you have in mind.

The script, you see, is really just a "blueprint" for your commercial. It enables everyone connected with it—client, creative director, actors, studio engineer—to understand what you have in mind. But now that script has be *produced* into an actual radio commercial. No matter how good your script is, no consumer is ever going to read it. They are just going to hear the produced spot. So if it doesn't work in that final form, then it just doesn't work. In order to turn a great script into a great commercial, you have to collaborate with many specialists—the client, the agency producer, the studio engineer (who actually pieces the whole radio spot together), the voice talents, and possibly musicians, composers, and lyricists. Every one of these specialists can help to make your spot great or help to make it horrible. That's why doing good radio and TV is such a wild card. Having a great script—radio or TV—is just the *beginning*. You're depending on a lot of other people to bring your spot to fruition. And if any one of those specialists stumbles your spot could be ruined. Yikes!!! Yes, it's really scary. The only way to protect your commercial is to choose the right people with whom to collaborate.

Sample Radio Script

ZICO "Giamazon 1" :60 Radio

SFX	DER NEHR NEHR NEHHHHRRR
DWAYNE:	Well heIIIIo there! I am Dwayne and this is "Dish in' with Dwayne." Tonight our topic is Secrets of the Fit and Fabulous!
BACKGROUND:	(singsong voices): FAAABULOUUUUS!
DWAYNE:	(clears throat): Yes, anyways, our guest of honor is Martia, the self-proclaimed Glamazon of the Amazon! Hailing from Brazil, Martia is a fitness extraordinaire, pioneering the Yoga-Samba technique-
SFX	SCREECH!
SFX	THUMP THUMP
MARTIA:	(tapping on the microphone) Is dis ting on?? Heelo!!
DWAYNE:	Martial Yes, stop that!
SFX	FUZZY NOISES OF THE MICROPHONE BEING BREATHED INTO LOUDLY
MARTIA:	(much too loudly): I am de Martia, Glamazon of de Amazon! (continues to mumble on about herself.)
DWAYNE:	MARTIAl
PRODUCER:	(Dwayne's microphone is still on, and you can hear the producer through it) Psst... Do you want to go to commercial?
DWAYNE:	Shh! No .. (clears throat): Everyone! Sorry about all the technical difficulties! Martia is here to tell us how she stays so fit and fabulous! Martia, yoga-samba is intense. How do you keep your energy? You look great!
MARTI A:	(scuffs): I do not look great! I look ze fabulous! Tee heel
SFX	MARTIA MAKES A KISSY NOISE
DWAYNE:	Yes, fabulous. What IS your secret?
MARTIA:	My secret iz..
SFX	DRUM ROLL
MARTIA:	I drink (whispers) Zico!
DWAYNE:	Huh? Zico?
MARTIA:	Shh! (whispers) Yes Zico. I lik-o Zico!
DWAYNE:	What is it?
MARTIA:	It's very special, you see ... a secret of Brazil! It's coconut water.
DWAYNE:	Coconut water?
MARTIA:	Shh! Secret! Low in calories, high in dat potassium stuff! Perfecto when I done working out. I look hot.
DWAYNE:	Ahh ... well, that's all we have time for today. Join us next week when Martia shows us her yoga-samba technique, all part of the fit and fabulous week on "Dishin with Dwayne."
MARTIA:	Adios!
SFX	DER NEHR NEHR NEHHHHRRR

Figure 6.1

A GREAT SCRIPT

Now, let's get back to how to write a great radio script. As I said earlier, the principle is simple—the fewer the words, the better the commercial. It's just that simple. So here's a good discipline, force yourself to write 30- or 60-second radio commercials that have only 10 words. What!? How? What's going to be *in* them? I hear you and I've heard it all before.

To get my students off to a good start, I do an in-class exercise. I pass out a magazine ad for Puffs facial tissue (Figure 6.2). The visual is of a fanciful, illustrated boy smiling as he uses a Puffs tissue. Other than that visual, there is just the box of Puffs in the lower right corner and a line of copy underneath that reads, "with lotion." This Puffs ad's unique selling proposition is softness. By using illustration rather than photography, the writer and art director are able to emphasize this all-important consumer benefit of "soft on the nose." The boy's nose is bigger than it would be in photography, he's even more endearing than he would be in photography and the ad overall is more cheerful and engaging.

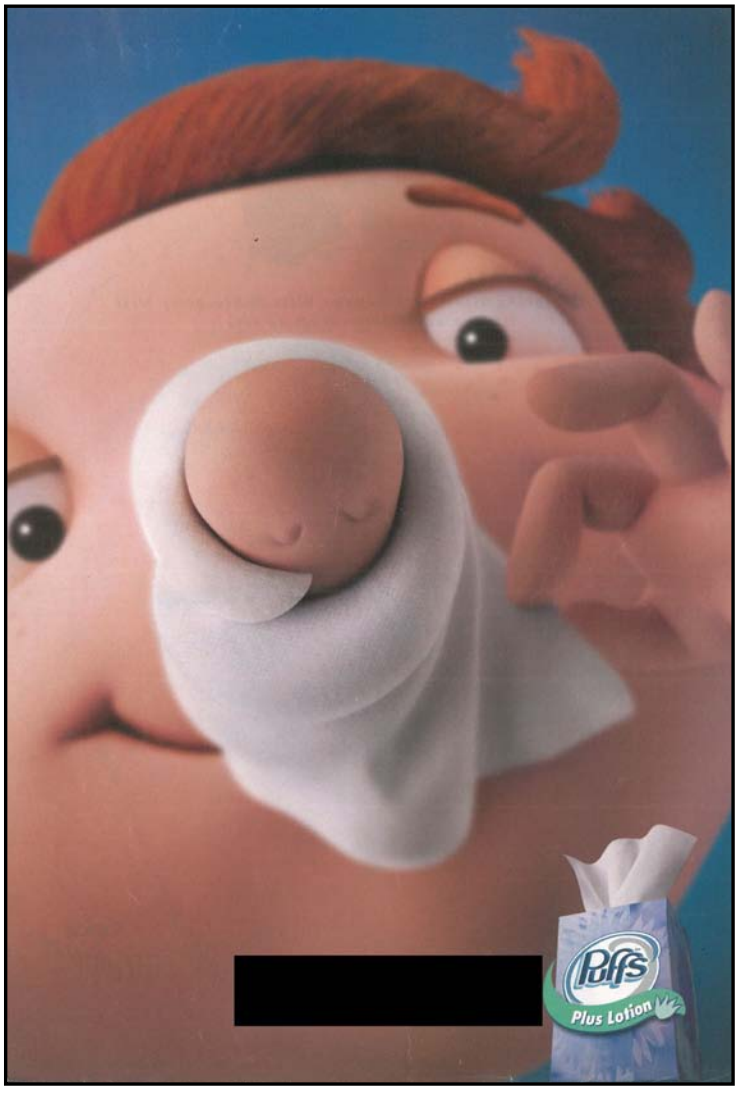


Figure 6.2

Now, I ask the students to translate that ad into a 30-second radio commercial using only 10 words. Everyone screams, "No way!" But, of course, I insist. The secret is to use primarily sound effects and *word sounds*, such as "Hmm," "uh," "awww," "huh?" etc., that don't count against the 10-word maximum. The second part of the secret is to think of your radio spot (and also your TV spots) as a *story*. So what we're really doing here is telling a *story* about a boy who has a cold and who needs to find a resolution that makes our "star"—Puffs—the hero. As a supporting hero, the target market needs to be recognized in our spot. Who is the targeted consumer for Puffs? Moms, as they are for over 80 percent of all household purchases. They are the decision makers, the buyers, and our commercial must recognize that "moms know best" when it comes to taking care of their families. The third secret is that because this is a *story* it must conform to the dictates of every story and have a beginning,

middle, and end. In this respect, the story starts with a problem; the problem is addressed; and then the problem is resolved by our hero, Puffs, and our all-important supporting hero—mom.

So here we go. Using the format I've set out above, we flesh out the script. I've done this exercise with over 50 classes and, surprisingly, the story unfolds pretty much the same all the time. Let's start at the beginning of the spot. As a matter of principle, it's always good to start your radio spot with a compelling sound effect. It grabs your audience by the collar and pulls them into the spot. So in this case, because we decided above that we need a problem, I'd start with a loud sneeze. That not only grabs the audience, but it also sets out the problem that is going to be addressed. Next, the boy pulls a tissue from a box. That's another sound effect. Then he blows his nose, yet another sound effect. But after the blow, he wipes his nose and we hear the sound effect of harsh scratching, as if sandpaper is rubbing against his nose. From there, I'd have the boy mutter some of our word sounds. His nose is sensitive from blowing it so much, and our competitor's tissue is only making the boy's misery worse. So word sounds like "Oooooo" or "Owwww" would be good. Now we have established he's in pain and needs help. And, look, we haven't used even one word! I'd have the boy sneeze again here and give a deep, sad sigh. Now, it's time for our first word. The boy whines, "Mom …" Next, we hear distant footsteps, a door opens, and the footsteps come closer. The simple word "mom" used in this context says volumes. We are continually revealing information here. Do you see that? Now we know this is a *boy* because only a child would call like this for his mother. Plus, we have set up mom to come to her child's rescue, thereby fulfilling our need to make her the expert at solving her child's problem (which is every mom's first and foremost priority, even if she is the CEO of Kraft Foods!). As mom sits down on the bed, she gives the boy sympathy with another word sound, "Awwww." Notice that there is no need for words here—too stilted and unnatural. "Awwww" is much more realistic *and* much better because it is so *primal*, as we learned all word sounds are. Now, I'd have the boy lament to mom again with another, "Mommmmm …" He is entreating her to help him. Once again we are all primal here. No mom likes to see her child in pain, even from a simple cold. She must rescue him. And that's where our brand comes in. Mom simply says, "Puffs," in a matter-of-fact intonation that says, well, *everything*. It says she is the expert. It says she has the solution to her child's pain. It says Puffs is the *only* tissue she would ever *dream* of using on her son's sore and sensitive nose. Just imagine—the right intonation on that *one* word says all that! Next, we'd have a sound effect of a Puffs tissue being pulled out of the box. Then, the boy blows his nose. And, unlike with the scratchy competitor's tissue, Puffs soothes his nose and his misery, and the boy says another word sound, "Ahhhhhh …" with relief. Then mom reacts to his comfort with the key consumer benefit of Puffs—it contains lotion right in the tissue for a softer, more gentle tissue. She simply says, "With lotion." The boy doesn't much care, because now comforted he is drifting off to sleep and soon we hear the sound effect of his gentle snoring. Another sound effect as mom tucks him under the covers and tiptoes away, softly closing the bedroom door behind her. Now—as in all radio and TV spots—it's good to finish with the "star"—your brand. So I'd have the announcer come in at this point to wrap it up, rather than have mom or the kid say anything too "commercial." The announcer would simply say, "Puffs. With lotion." Then to make the spot come full circle *and* reiterate the consumer

benefit to the target market—moms—I'd have the boy contentedly say, "Ahhhhhhh …" Look at that! We didn't even need 10 words, only 8. Yet, we told a wonderful brand story—we solved a boy's discomfort, depicted his mom as a hero, and the tool of heroics was, low and behold, our brand—Puffs. This is great radio. Radio that doesn't' talk at you. In fact, it hardly talks at all! It's radio that grabs us by the collar, pulls us into the spot, tells us a story that's relevant to our target market of moms, and creates a warm, emotional feeling for our brand among that target market. And we did it all with only 8 words and 30 seconds! That's magic. And it's how all great advertising *works* its magic—by manipulating our most primal instincts to sell us a client's brand.

LIMBERING-UP EXERCISE #1: RADIO

Now it's your turn. We'll use preexisting magazine ads just like we did in our print exercises. Pick several magazine ads and do the same thing with them as we have done with this Puffs ad—translate them into 30-second radio commercials using only 10 words per commercial. The dictate of only 10 words forces you to rely on your sound effects and word sounds to tell your story. And that, in turn, will ensure that you write a great radio spot. One that creates a setting, situation, and story that genuinely touches your consumer. One that doesn't talk, talk, talk, but *shows*, *shows*, *shows*. A spot that we see in our mind's eye even if we can't see it with our actual eyes.

THE POWER OF THE JINGLE

One of the hallmarks of advertising is the jingle. The reason is because these simple, repetitive, miniature songs drive their way into our consciousness and refuse to budge. They are very, very effective ways to make the consumer benefit memorable. When you take the consumer benefit and put it to music and play it on the radio or TV, it sings—literally and figuratively.

So, if that's true then why don't we see (and hear!) jingles more often? The reason is that they are *such* a stalwart of advertising that they have become a cliché. Young copywriters, and justly so, want to do new and innovative work, and jingles just don't fit the bill. But I notice that's changing. What often happens in advertising is that something is *so* old it becomes *new* again. That's what's happening with the jingle. I've begun to see it used more often in TV campaigns, and in the radio ads that supports them. During radio's heyday—from the mid-1950s to about 2000—the jingle was the preferred genre to reach the all-important 12-to-24 target market. Every summer, the big beverage companies like Coke and Pepsi had a new jingle that they built their radio and TV campaigns around. We may never see that kind of dominance again. But the jingle still is a powerful manipulative tool in our magician's bag of tricks. And writing a good jingle is a real skill. It's one of the many hats you can wear as a copywriter. Now you're a songwriter! Let's get started.

The first step is to take your consumer benefit that answers the question, "What's in it for me?" and turn it into a memorable couplet. Rhyme is the best way to do this. The last words in the couplet

rhyme. If you have two couplets, maybe they have different rhymes. So now the consumer benefit is encased in a supremely memorable format. Then we add the clincher—the music. The key to writing the lyrics and music for a jingle is simplicity. Keep your lyrics to one or two couplets and then repeat them over and over. Don't feel bad about the repetition. After all, most of the greatest pop and rock songs do the same thing—they call it the "hook." If your jingle has the right hook, it will continue playing in your consumer's mind long after the commercial has ended.

When I wrote lyrics, I would then take them to a music house where they would come up with a melody (and lyrics if need be). Some copywriters played the guitar or piano and wrote the melodies themselves. But that was the exception. Few of them had the musical talent to compete with the music houses. At JWT, we often used music houses in Nashville, but also in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. It just depended on the kind of jingle we envisioned. Once we had the core melody, then we would do it in several musical genres—pop, hard rock, country, blues, rap, etc. Each of those musical genres then would play on the radio station appropriate to that genre. The original melody—one that would reach the broadest target—would usually be used for the TV commercial.

Another great thing about jingles is their versatility. You can do a jingle that has lyrics for 30 seconds, but then you can drop out the lyrics from the middle and bring in the announcer. That's called a donut because the music starts and ends the commercial, but in the middle—the hole—there's announcer copy. You can do the same thing in a TV commercial—grab the consumer by the collar with the music, go to announcer copy in the middle, and then finish with your memorable couplet at the end. When I wrote the lyrics for the introduction of Gillette's Daisy Shaver, sometimes we used the jingle throughout the entire commercial and other times just at the opening and end. The music would continue playing, of course, but the lyrics would drop out so the announcer could make copy points in the middle of the commercial. I've included the complete Daisy lyrics in the appendix at the end of this book to illustrate. Imagine if only the first and last couplets were used but the middle lyrics were dropped out to make room for an announcer. That would be described as a donut, whether in radio or TV.

When I was at JWT in the 1970s, whole multimedia campaigns were built around one great jingle. They did that for Burger King, with the hook of "America's Burger King." Everyone knew, of course, that McDonald's was "America's burger king," but that's why it was such a powerful and gutsy consumer benefit. The point is, however, that a whole pool of TV and radio commercials were built on that jingle, and it was the jingle that was the glue that held that entire campaign together, whether TV or radio, regardless of musical genre. Leo Burnett was even more famous for using jingles to drive and hold their campaigns together. "From the valley of the Giant, ho, ho, ho, Green Giant!" "Snap, crackle, pop … Rice Krispies!" You get the point.

I have so many favorite jingles to direct you to. I recommend you go to YouTube and simply type in "advertising jingles" and listen to them. Some go back 60 years to the beginnings of TV. Listen to them and learn from them. Keep your "student hat" on and study these jingles. Ask yourself what makes them so effective. I think you'll find it's the attributes I've set out above—clever rhymed couplets, catchy melody, simplicity, and *repetition*.

Here are a few of my favorites to get your started. They're easy to find on YouTube by just typing in what I have here.

"Sometimes you feel like a nut, sometimes you don't."—Almond Joy and Mounds
"I wish I were an Oscar Meyer wiener."—Oscar Meyer hot dogs
"I'm stuck on Band Aids brand 'cause Band Aids stuck on me."—Band Aids bandages
"You deserve a break today … at McDonald's."—McDonald's
"I want to buy the world a Coke."—Coca-Cola
"Be a Pepper … Drink Dr. Pepper."—Dr. Pepper

These will give you something to aspire to in writing your own jingles. And you can find hundreds of other examples on your own. Study the greats. Sometime in the future, when you're a working copywriter and you're stuck for a big idea, I hope you'll consider a jingle. There are few devices more powerful in a copywriter's bag of tricks. It's a great way to take an otherwise mediocre campaign and make it, well … sing!

LIMBERING-UP EXERCISE #2: WRITING A JINGLE

As I said, I wrote the lyrics for Daisy, and they're in the back of this book, but don't look now. First, why don't you take on exactly the same project we had? Take these copy points for Daisy and turn them into a jingle. You can write to any melody you want. That will help you with syllable breaks, which should correspond to the musical notes. For example, "happy" has two syllables "hap-py" and each should have a musical note. Also, as I said earlier, couplets that rhyme at the end make the lyrics memorable and fun. Also, I think you'll find it easier to write lyrics if you put them in stanzas like you would a poem. The brand name of Daisy also gives you a lot of possibilities because it's a flower and you can allude to things connected with flowers. Think about that. It's a tip that will help you and one I used a lot. Okay, assume you are writing a 60-second jingle. Here are the feature-benefit combos the client wants included, with the emphasis on *safety*. When you're finished, take a look at my lyrics in the appendix at the end of the book and the actual screenshots of the commercial. I give my students this same assignment, and they often do as well, if not better, than I did.

Daisy has twin blades that shave close, but safe.
Daisy has a curved head, so you can see where you're shaving.
Daisy shavers are completely disposable.
Two Daisy shavers come in each package.
Daisy's handle has tiny grips for safe shaving in the shower.
Daisy is the first shaver designed expressly for women.

Chapter Seven

Wordsmithing in TV

Here's another hat for you to wear as a copywriter—screenwriter and filmmaker. When you do a TV commercial, that's really what you are, only your "film" is 30 seconds long and your "star" is your client's brand. A TV commercial is a miniature film with all of the components of a feature film—shooting, editing, music, musical scores, scripts, actors, special effects. And, just as in radio, don't forget that your commercial is ultimately a *story*. It's a story about your client's brand and how important it is to its targeted consumers' lives. So everything that applies to telling a great story applies here—drama, humor, pathos, action, fantasy, etc., etc. And, just as in any story, your commercial should have a beginning, middle, and end.

In order to tell a story in a commercial you have to understand the *language* of film. Yes, film is a language, just as French, Italian, and Spanish are languages. It's a language in the sense that we share feelings and thoughts with other human beings via the filmed images. Before you can write great TV commercials, you have to understand the language.

Films that tell stories originated only about 110 years ago. Before that time, films were just oddities of an expository nature. The early filmmakers would "lock down the camera" (because the film exposure was so slow even a slight movement of the camera blurred the images) and then simply film what they saw. It could be a horse running past the camera. It could be a man doing stunts. At first, film was such a novelty that these simple curiosities were enough for the audience. But they soon grew bored and wanted more—more of a story, more visual impact, more action.

About that time, the one indispensable element in the language of film was created. This is the one essential technique that makes film the art form it is today. Can you guess what it is? I ask my students the same question and few guess the right answer. Just to tease you a bit—film would not be a language without this device. It could not tell a story without this device. And this device is so familiar to all of us who grew up watching film that we don't even "see" it anymore. Can you guess? Okay, okay, I'll give you the answer—the cut. Some of you might

call it editing or an edit. But first it was called a cut because 110 years ago filmmakers actually *did* cut two pieces of film from different scenes and then tape them together in what came to be known as a splicing. Now, of course, all this is done digitally. But it's still the cut. It's not physical anymore, but in all other respects it's the same—it makes film the powerful storytelling medium it is today.

Edwin Stanton Porter, who directed the *Great Train Robbery*, is given credit for the first use of the cut. But I bet many early filmmakers were experimenting with it. I'm sure they were frustrated with simply *documenting* what they filmed in wide angles and long shots, with cameras that were literally locked to the ground so the film image wouldn't blur. They *recorded* what happened but didn't tell the *story* of what was happening. Then, Porter discovered that it would be so much more involving for the audience if they were *closer* to the actors. When the actors were doing something important—crying, screaming, kissing, dying, etc.—a cut from a wide shot to a close shot could take the audience and literally put them right in the actor's face! That's something live theater could never do, no matter how great your seats! A story is told that the first time an audience experienced a cut from a wide shot to a close-up they gasped in surprise and even horror! They had never seen anything like this. Now, filmmakers had the device that would allow them to tell a *story*, instead of just record images. In a very real sense, early filmmakers and their audiences learned the language of film together.

So the cut was born. And when you see images in your head and they tell a story, ask yourself why and how. I think you'll find it's because of the cut. You are mentally cutting between images, and the resulting montage of all those images tells a *story*. In a TV commercial, those stories are about brands. Brands that make us cry, laugh, sad, happy, astounded. And that's why TV, more than any other advertising medium, is the definitive medium in creating brand personalities. Whereas every other advertising medium is limited, TV has *everything*—images, color, sound, music, great acting, sound effects, jingles, and, most of all, the *power* of the *cut* working inside your consumer's head. Working to inform, persuade, and manipulate. The television commercial—even if it's not on television—is the most powerful branding device in a copywriter's bag of manipulative tricks. Now, let's discover the secrets to the sleight of hand.

WRITE IMAGES, NOT WORDS

We've already learned that all great advertising is visual. In print, we learned that if we have a great visual, we're 90 percent on our way to having a great ad. We've learned how to think visually, even in radio. Now we need to learn how to think visually in film—that is, the television commercial. You might think this is a no-brainer. Think visually in a TV commercial? What *is* a TV commercial if not visual? I'll tell you what it is—words, words, words, and more words. Most commercials don't *show* us, they *tell us*. And those commercials invariably fail.

Most students who want to be copywriters want to write for TV. Writing for TV has its own principles just as print and radio do. First and foremost among these principles is this: don't *tell* me; *show* me. *Action* defines *character*. In a TV commercial, you have characters (including the

brand itself) just like you do in a movie. Those characters' *actions*—what they *do*, not what they *say*—tell your audience who they are. Here's an example I give my students that makes this come alive. Let's say I'm on the second story of my burning house, yelling for help. The first person who walks by on his way to the train station glances up, thinks "too bad," but looks at his watch and keeps walking to make his train. The second man thinks the same "too bad," and keeps walking to make his train, *but* calls 911 to report my dilemma. Finally, the third man comes upon me. He drops his briefcase, tears off his coat and tie, and rushes into the house to save me. Now, based strictly on their actions, what can you tell me about each of those men? Man number one: a selfish SOB. Man number two: self-involved but willing to do the least expected of him as a fellow human being. Man number three: a hero. *Action* is *character*. TV is all about telling your story with images. The words are almost incidental. I tell my students to regard writing for TV as you would regard writing a caption for a still picture. Because "a picture is worth a thousand words," and a film doubly so, *don't overwrite*. One of the most frequent mistakes students make in writing TV is overwriting. Your visuals are going to say nearly everything you need to say, and the words are just there to fill in any blanks.

STITCHING IMAGES TOGETHER

As we learned in the print section, visuals that are "disconnects"—visuals that don't make any obvious sense—are compelling and grab consumers by their collars and drag them in. Now we need to accomplish that same feat in film. We humans are always looking for connections rather than disconnections—we are always striving to make sense of things. This is important to remember when writing for film because you can have two scenes back to back that make no sense together, yet your consumers, being the human beings that they are, will find some logical connection between the two. Early in this book, I wrote about stimulus and response. This is how that principle works in film. The consumers of your commercial are happiest when you ask them to do some *connecting*. So when you present them with some *disconnects*, they feel compelled to turn those *disconnects* into *connections*. As a result, you have artificially created two-way communication with those consumers, even though you'll never see them or hear from them. All communication, even mass communication, needs to be *reciprocal* in order for it to be effective. When you supply your consumers with the stimulus—the disconnects—they understand it is their job to give you the response—the connections. That artificially creates two-way communication in mass communications. In film, this principle works by creating a series of images that don't quite add up to anything and, thereby, force the consumer to respond to your stimulus, that is, your commercial. Being nonlinear rather than linear is a good way to encourage consumers to get involved. They feel a deep psychological need to turn disconnects into connections—to make "right" what is "wrong." Understand this powerful desire in your consumers and turn it to your manipulative advantage in your television commercials … and, really, all of your advertising.

LEARNING TO WRITE IMAGES, NOT WORDS

Step one: study commercials and feature films that you admire. As I said before, studying advertising is easy because it's all around us. So always keep on your "student hat" and learn from what's already out there. In that respect, here's a tip: you can learn as much from bad commercials as you can from good ones. When a commercial registers for you as "bad," examine why. I'd bet it's a commercial that tells its story with *words*, instead of *images*. Just as in radio, it's all talk, talk, talk. It *tells* you, instead of *shows* you. The old adage "words are cheap" is so true in advertising, but for a different reason. They're cheap because nobody remembers them. Consumers remember *images*. Here's another, more unusual way to learn to tell stories with just images—the silent film. I know few of you have ever seen a silent film, but it is an excellent way to study how to use images to tell a story. Personally, I love silent film. My community library has several silent classics, many of which are comedies with Chaplin, Keaton, and others. You can also find silent films online. Wherever you find them, watching them is a great learning experience. The silent-film comics, in particular, were masters at telling a story with just images. Of course, all silent films had title cards interspersed with the images, but the comedies had the fewest because the comedy was so visual. These films drive home the power of my adage—"don't tell me, show me."

Now you're ready for step two: get used to envisioning images in your head. Before you describe the images in a script, you first have to *envision* them in your head. I wrote four feature-length screenplays and over half of each script is composed of descriptions of visual action, *not dialogue*. So a lot of what I was doing was envisioning the *action* of the characters, then writing down what I "saw." The same goes for a commercial. See it first in your head, then write down what you see on paper.

Step three: ban words from the envisioning process. See just the images as they come to your mind, then connect them into a story. If a word sneaks in, shut the mental door right in its face. Don't imagine in words, imagine in images. Play the commercial in your head over and over, moving images around, adding new ones, losing weak ones. Here, words are superfluous. Words are a crutch. They are the enemy of all great advertising, especially in TV. Practice telling your story without any words. See only the images in your mind's eye. Then take those images from your mind and describe them on paper.

Step four: now you're ready to write some actual commercials. Just as in radio, the fewer words you use, the better the commercial will be. You will *always* find this to be true. So your mission in writing TV is very simple—think visually, never verbally. Here's how to force yourself to do that. When my students begin writing TV commercials, I insist they use *no spoken words*. You should follow this same advice. I know it's a shock. But it's also a great discipline. It will force you to write with images instead of with words. I only allow them one sentence at the end of the commercial that appears as a title or "super" (short for "superimposed" on the visual). I call this the "killer line," because the success of the entire commercial rests on it. The killer line should make the consumer benefit clear, resolve the story that the commercial has told, and be wonderfully clever. In fact, the killer line is a lot like a headline in print. If you remember, we decided that a headline needed to do two things: first, it needed to promise the consumer a

brand benefit, and second, it needed to make that promise in a clever, memorable, creative way. The killer line should do the same.

Step five: practice, practice, practice … the first four steps. Because you're not in my class, you have to have this discipline yourself. I can't impose it on you. You're limbering up here just as you did in print and radio. There are a lot of different ways to practice the principles I've set out here. The first way is to pick a commercial you dislike and, using only images, make it great. The second way is to take a commercial that you *like* and do the *next* commercial in the campaign. We'll learn more about campaigns later, but for now it's enough to say that this next commercial should be similar to the first, but still different enough to grab your consumer's interest. A third way is to find a magazine ad, like we did for radio, and "translate" it into a TV commercial using images *only* and just the killer line at the end. The important thing is to remember that we are limbering up—just as we did in print. You're getting practice doing TV so you'll have some experience before you launch into doing full campaigns at the end of this book. You literally need to write hundreds of commercials because the old adage is so true, "practice makes perfect." Furthermore, instead of just writing scripts, it would be better to flesh out your commercials in a very rough storyboard. I'll get into the specifics of storyboarding later, but I wanted to mention this now because storyboarding will help you learn to tell a story solely with images. No artistic ability is necessary. Simple stick figures are fine because it's a learning exercise and for "your eyes only." Storyboarding helps you stitch the individual images in your head into a *series* of images that tell a *story*.

THE PERSUASIVE ESSAY IN COMMERCIALS

Now it's time to throw you a curve. After you practice writing commercials, as I've recommended above, using just images and one killer line at the end, shake things up. You'll remember back in the print section that I wrote that the body copy in a print ad is really a miniature persuasive essay. Often, the client, and even your creative director, is not going to be comfortable with just one line of copy at the end of the spot. The client may feel strongly—and correctly—that the brand has a compelling USP that needs more copy to bring to fruition. In other words, they want some "sell" copy in there. This doesn't have to be a complete disaster for your commercial. When you're required to make some copy points throughout your spot—as I said above—keep your writing *lean*. A word here or a phrase there are all you need to reinforce the images. This is called **audio-video reinforcement**. And this is the perfect type of commercial in which to use this powerfully persuasive technique. Audio-video reinforcement—the right word or phrase over the right corresponding visual—is the way you take the miniature persuasive essay from print and make it work in TV.

I did a commercial that's a perfect example. The leader in work gloves—Wells Lamont—was coming out with a new work glove called Grips. Its USP is that it was the first work glove that was curved like the human hand, for a grip that just won't give. Visually, we needed a spot that was highly introductory—"the second coming" kind of feel. So here's the video part of the commercial:

to dramatic music, the hand rises up from the bottom of the screen, magically the Grips glove fits over it perfectly, the gloved hand turns sideways, and a dotted line follows its unique precurved design; finally the gloved hand magically leaps out at us as it grabs a rope from thin air and the super comes on: "Grips. From Wells Lamont." Now, keeping that visual story in mind, here is the copy I wrote. I think you'll be able to tell where the copy matched with the visuals I've described.

> The human hand. It's not flat. It's curved. And now, finally, there's a glove built around it. Grips. From Wells Lamont. The only all-purpose glove with the patented precurved design. For a comfortable grip that just won't give. Grips. From Wells Lamont.

Look how lean that copy is—just 44 words—yet it makes for a very persuasive story that's told simply and logically. All along the way, the words reinforce what we are seeing visually—a classic use of audio-video reinforcement. The highly introductory visuals are perfectly paired with the highly introductory music and voice-over copy to create a powerful one-two persuasive punch. This is the kind of commercial you will write most often. Just because it sells hard does not mean it can't entertain. Yes, I said entertain. This commercial entertains—as all commercials must—with its drama and powerful simplicity.

So, now more work for you. Just as you wrote hundreds of commercials that told their stories with just images and one "killer line" at the end, now practice writing commercials like this Grips spot. Still come up with a compelling visual story, but overlay it with copy that reinforces your visuals and makes a memorable persuasive argument.

PUTTING IT ALL INTO A SCRIPT

Now that you're on your way to thinking visually, it's time to learn the correct script format in which to express your ideas. There's an accepted format for TV, just as there is for radio. Unlike radio, in which we work horizontally across the page, in TV, we use a spilt-page format. I've included a sample script to guide you (Figure 7.1). Let's break it down and examine how it works and why.

As you can see, the page is vertically split in half, the left half contains the video instructions and the right half contains the audio instructions and dialogue. Notice that the video side of the page is always in capital letters. Because the audio side of the script is simpler and a lot like radio, let's start there. The audio side uses the same abbreviation we used in radio to denote a sound effect—SFX—and then the effect you describe is in all caps and underlined. Music and lyrics are handled the same way as we described in radio. Also, just like radio, the talent is in all caps, but what they say—the dialogue—is always upper and lower case. There is one last thing about the talent, however, that does not apply in radio and that is important in a TV script. You need to indicate whether the talent is talking *on* or *off* camera. You indicate this with either LS (for lip-sync) or VO (for voice over). When you indicate after the talent's name (LS), you are

Sample TV Script

CLIENT: WELLS LAMONT
JOB#: W-L002
TITLE: "GET A GRIP"
TIME: :30 TV SCRIPT

VIDEO	**AUDIO**
OPEN ON MS OF MAN'S HAND RISING UP FROM BOTTOM OF SCREEN	DRAMATIC MUSIC UP AND UNDER
HAND MOVES INTO CENTER OF SCREEN	ANNCR (manly) (VO): The human hand.
CAMERA PULLS IN ON HAND	It's not flat. It's curved.
DISSOLVE AS GRIPS GLOVE FITS OVER HAND GLOVED HAND MOVES FROM	And now, finally, there's a glove built around it.
GLOVED HAND MOVES FROM VERTICAL TO HORIZONTAL POSITION	
SUPER "GRIPS" AS IT COMES ON SCREEN, MOVES OVER THE GLOVED HAND AND OFF SCREEN TO VIEWER'S LEFT	SFX: WHOOSH AS G RIPS PASSES Grips. From Wells Lamont.
SUPER "PRE-CURVED" AS IT FOLLOWS THE CURVED CONTOUR OF THE GLOVED HAND, WITH DOTS FOR EMPHASIS	SFX: DOTS FOLLOWING CONTOUR The only all-purpose work glove with the patented pre-curved design.
SUDDENLY THE GLOVED HAND LEAPS OUT AT US AND GRABS A ROPE THAT HAS COME INTO FRAME	SFX: WHOOSH AS GLOVE GRABS ROPE For a comfortable grip that just won't give.
GLOVED HAND GRIPPING THE ROPE COMES TO A STANDSTILL	Grips. From Wells Lamont.
SUPER "GRIPS FROM WELLS LAMONT"	

Figure 7.1

telling the reader of the script that this talent is talking on-camera. VO indicates that the talent is talking off camera and over the scene.

On the video side, you'll notice a lot of abbreviations and terms you might not be familiar with. Let's work through them one by one. Because the script should be a written description of the commercial, you have to take what you see in your mind's eye and put it on paper so others can "see" it as well. That, in turn, means you have to think like a filmmaker, because that's what you're writing—a miniature, 30-second film.

The script—and later the storyboard of the script—doesn't include every shot or scene in the commercial. That would be repetitious and cumbersome. What are included in the script are the *key* shots or scenes in the commercial. These key shots or scenes give the reader a good representation of how the commercial will play. In order for the reader to see the shots or scenes as you see them, you need to use abbreviations that describe each shot and how you go from shot to shot. Here are the most common video terms used.

I like to use the term OPEN ON at the beginning of the commercial on the video side. I just think it sets the scene, After OPEN ON, it's important to tell the reader what kind of shot you're opening on—LS denotes LONG SHOT (or you can use WS for WIDE SHOT), MS denotes MEDIUM SHOT, and CU denotes CLOSE-UP. So now, as the reader, I can see what you have in mind for how the commercial starts. Now, how are you going to get from one scene to another? The most common transition is a cut, the importance of which I have already discussed. So in the script we would simply write something like this: "OPEN ON A LS OF A CLASSROOM OF STUDENTS." Then we'd skip a couple lines and write: "CUT TO CU OF CHALK SCRAPING ACROSS A BLACKBOARD," and so on, until all of the key shots or scenes are accounted for. A script for a 30-second commercial shouldn't be longer than one page or a touch more. Remember, that these shots or scenes are *representative*. You need only enough of them to adequately convey to the readers how you see the commercial unfolding. Ironically, the longer and more detailed the script becomes, the less it does to represent the commercial that's in your mind. It just becomes too specific and too long, and your readers get lost and frustrated. Do make it representative, but also make it simple.

Now, if you used just the terms I've indicated in the above example, you'd be fine. But there are times when you need to indicate more nuance. For example, a cut is only one way to get from shot to shot or scene to scene. There is also a "dissolve," in which two adjoining scenes overlap for a split second before the second scene takes over the first. All dissolves are done digitally now, but when they were actually done on real film, you would indicate SHORT CUT for a very quick dissolve of eight frames, DISSOLVE for a standard 12-frame dissolve, and LONG DISSOLVE would indicate something quite longer—say a 36-frame dissolve. In older films, you might notice that they are very *slow*. Partly that is because the audience didn't grow up understanding the language of film as we do today. Film was a new language, and the filmmakers had to be much slower and more literal in telling their stories than they need be today. So in older films, for example, you see a long dissolve to indicate to the audience that a significant period of time has passed. You might even see an old film in which pages fly off a calendar to denote the

passage of time. Dissolves aren't used much anymore. Cuts, and even JUMP CUTs, are used to transition because all of us "get it." Audiences don't need the handholding they used to.

Other nuances that you can add to a script would be to indicate the camera movement *within* a scene. The common directions for camera movements are: "CAMERA DOLLYS INTO THE CLASSROOM WHERE IT COMES TO REST ON THE INSTRUCTOR." Or the reverse: "CAMERA DOLLYS OUT OF THE CLASSROOM AND INTO THE HALL AND OUT OF THE BUILDING." Here, you'll notice we are denoting more than one shot, so it's not just a LONG SHOT or MEDIUM SHOT because the camera is moving. We need to describe that in the script so the readers can get a good sense of what they'd be seeing. Other terms would be PAN LEFT or PAN RIGHT. You use the term PAN to indicate camera movement only from left to right or right to left. So the script would read: "CAMERA PANS LEFT TO MS OF STUDENT TAKING NOTES." If you want to indicate a movement that's up and down, the term is TILT: "CAMERCA TILTS UP TO REVEAL WATER DRIPPING FROM THE CEILING." Or "CAMERA TILTS DOWN TO STUDENT'S BARE FEET." The last major nuance is the ZOOM.

The difference between a ZOOM and a DOLLY or TRACKING SHOT, is that with a DOLLY shot, the camera is actually moving, whereas, with a ZOOM the camera is *not* actually moving; it is fixed and the lens is zooming in on something in the scene. The effect or feeling that you get is very different between a DOLLY and a ZOOM. The ZOOM is much more dramatic and often calls a lot of attention to itself. The DOLLY, on the other hand, is more subtle and natural and doesn't call attention to itself like the ZOOM. Once again, these are filmmaking tools that allow you to express yourself in the language of film. So you have to give some careful thought when you write the script as to what effects your shots having on your audience.

There are a few other more unusual shots that your script can denote: crane shot, helicopter shot, underwater shot. The one thing they have in common is that they are all expensive to pull off. But that's okay. It's too early in the process to compromise. So go for it. Write the commercial as you ideally see it. Then let the client, creative director, commercial director—whomever—pull you back. The writer and art director on one of my favorite more recent commercials—the Old Spice spot in which we open on a guy in a shower and then follow him onto a boat and finally onto a horse—said it best. They come up with the great ideas and let the production company worry about how to actually do it on film. That's a good attitude to have. I tell my students that with CGI (computer-generated imagery) *anything* you envision can be done. The only question is how much it's going to cost. So let your imagination run wild and free. Don't limit your creativity with doubts.

In my own personal experience as a writer, I was a strong visual thinker and I came up with many visuals that production companies, photographers, and art directors were not sure they could pull off. I did a commercial for the American Cancer Society that introduced mammography as the first line of detection for breast cancer (Figure 7.2). First, we came up with a print campaign. Then the client liked it so well that he asked us to make it into a commercial. But *how*? Finally, my art director partner and I came up with the idea of having one drop of ink falling in super slow motion through space and finally coming to rest on a piece of blank white paper. Then the camera pulls out and we see how small this drop actually is—thereby, demonstrating

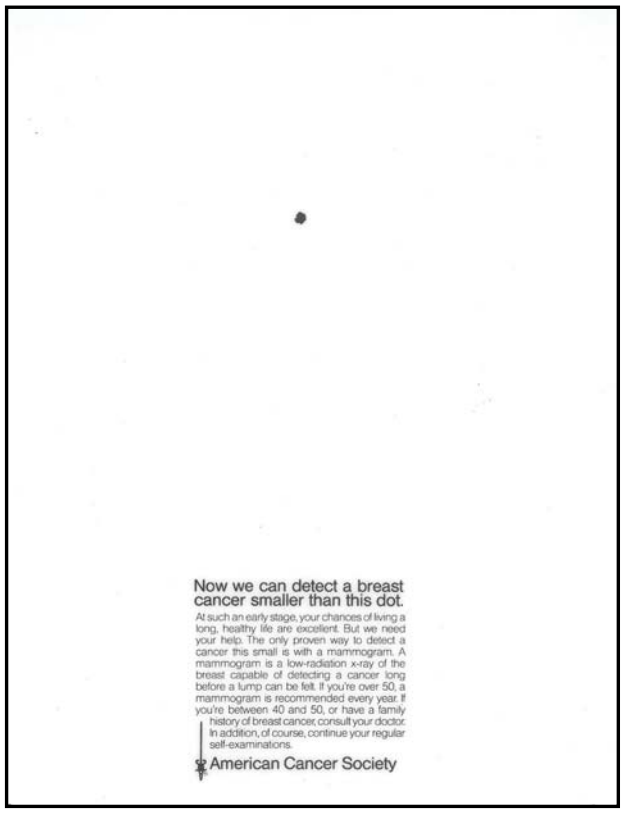

Now we can detect a breast cancer smaller than this dot.
At such an early stage, your chances of living a long, healthy life are excellent. But we need your help. The only proven way to detect a cancer this small is with a mammogram. A mammogram is a low-radiation x-ray of the breast capable of detecting a cancer long before a lump can be felt. If you're over 50, a mammogram is recommended every year. If you're between 40 and 50, or have a family history of breast cancer, consult your doctor. In addition, of course, continue your regular self-examinations.
American Cancer Society

Figure 7.2

that mammography can detect a breast cancer long before self-breast examination, when it's much more curable. Great spot, but initially we couldn't find a director who could shoot it. Filming in such super slow motion—slow enough to capture a drop of ink falling through space hadn't been done before. We thought we were going to have to kill the spot, but then our assistant producer at the agency found a still photographer who was experimenting with just that kind of super slow motion. We took a chance on him and the spot turned out beautifully. It really broke new technical ground. But it was a really boring shoot. In order for film to appear to be in super slow motion when it's projected, it needs to be shot in super high speed. Every take took a whole magazine of film, but only seconds to shoot. Then we'd have to break, reload another magazine of film, and do it all over. About a hundred takes later, we had enough footage of that ink drop falling through space for a 30-second commercial. We were there a solid 10 hours and we didn't know what we had until the next day, when we screened the footage. It was a real leap of faith, but it paid off spectacularly.

That's what happens when you challenge your suppliers. Suppliers or vendors are the freelance people agencies contract with to do things that they do not have the personnel to do within the agencies. That includes commercial directors, photographers, illustrators, CGI specialists, printers, etc. The list goes on and on. It would be cost-prohibitive for agencies to have such specialized people on staff because they would be underutilized. When they are freelance, agencies bid the job out to several of these specialists and then go with the one they think can do the best job,

at the best price. The moral of this story for you as a writer (and your art director partner) is to *embrace* your suppliers and *challenge* them to push their creative and technical limits. The best suppliers want you to do this. They crave new challenges. The ones who don't, you can live without. You always want to work with suppliers who tell you *how* you can do something, not why you *can't*. So dream big. In my experience, there's always someone, somewhere, who can pull off in reality what you have in your head.

A "SUPER" VERSUS A TITLE

If you have words or a slogan that's superimposed over the visual in a commercial, that is called a **super**, short for "superimposed." If the words or slogan stand alone and are *not* superimposed over a visual, then that is indicated as a "title." Supers are often used because, as you'd expect, the client really likes to see his or her brand on screen, visualized, when the words or slogan are also on the screen. This is called audio-video reinforcement and is one of the classic techniques used to communicate and persuade in our business. The communications theory, of course, is easy to understand and appreciate—your persuasive message will be more memorable and persuasive if the consumer sees what she is hearing and hearing what she is seeing.

This audio-video reinforcement can also work with a title. As opposed to a super, the title leaves the words or slogan on the screen by itself, without any other visuals. Having a voice-over announcer *say* the words that the consumer is also *reading* on the title can be very dramatic and memorable. This can be as effective as a super when used properly. Cutting to just a title, rather than a super, is much more dramatic and emphatic. What you lose by not having the words or slogan superimposed over a visual you gain with the simplicity and starkness of the title. Choosing between a super or title—or neither—is a further nuance in writing commercials that you'll gradually learn as you write more. Our business is all about gut, not about head. As you write more and more commercials, you'll instinctively know which "feels" best in a given commercial. There is no substitute for practice. As I said earlier, however, in your TV limbering-up exercises, use *no* spoken words. Deliver your killer line only visually—as a super or a title at the end.

STORYBOARDING

Copywriters and art directors often work in script form until a commercial looks as if it is going to be presented to the agency's upper management and/or client. As a halfway measure, the art director might draw a very rough, black and white storyboard to present to the creative director or executive creative director. The reason is that doing "comp" (short for completed) storyboards takes a lot of the art director's time, even when the visuals are done on the Mac. Because time is literally money at the agency (money that ultimately the client will have to pay), it's best to expend as little of it as possible.

VIDEO
OPEN ON MS OF THREE DULL PENCILS.
AUDIO
SFX: SNORING
FEMALE PENCIL (sighing) (LS): I was so dull. My life had no point.
VIDEO
FEMALE PENCIL STARTLES OTHER PENCILS AWAKE.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Then I met Mr. Sharpy.
VIDEO
CUT TO CU OF MR. SHARPY PENCIL SHARPENER.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (VO): The automatic cordless pencil sharpener from Sunbeam.
VIDEO
CUT TO FEMALE PENCIL JUMPING INTO MR. SHARPY.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Mr. Sharpy turns on...
SFX: MR. SHARPY SHARPENING.
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Oooooooo!
VIDEO
FEMALE PENCIL JUMPS OUT OF MR. SHARPY.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): ... and off automatically.
VIDEO
FEMALE PENCIL LOOKS LOVINGLY AT MR. SHARPY.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): And because it's cordless, I can sharpen up anyplace.
VIDEO
CUT TO FEMALE PENCIL AND MR. SHARPY IN A HOME SITUATION.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Home.
VIDEO
CUT TO FEMALE PENCIL AND MR. SHARPY IN AN OFFICE SITUATION.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Work.
VIDEO
CUT TO FEMALE PENCIL AND MR. SHARPY IN A SCHOOL SITUATION.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Or school.
VIDEO
FEMALE PENCIL TIES A GIFT BOW ONTO MR. SHARPY.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): But the point is Mr. Sharpy makes a great gift for anyone.
VIDEO
CUT TO CU OF MR. SHARPY AS HE GIVES THE FEMALE PENCIL A BIG KISS AND A HEART POPS ONTO SCREEN.
AUDIO
SFX: SOUND OF KISS SMACKING.
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): He sure pointed me
VIDEO
CUT TO MS SHOT OF MR. SHARPY AND THE FEMALE PENCIL, AS THE PENCIL WRITES OUT THE SUPER: "Mr. Sharpy. From Sunbeam."
AUDIO
ANNCR (VO): Mr. Sharpy. From Sunbeam.

Figure 7.3

VIDEO
OPEN ON MS OF THREE DULL PENCILS.
AUDIO
SFX: SNORING
FEMALE PENCIL (sighing) (LS):
I was so dull. My life had no point.
VIDEO
FEMALE PENCIL STARTLES OTHER PENCILS AWAKE.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Then I met Mr. Sharpy.
VIDEO
CUT TO CU OF MR. SHARPY PENCIL SHARPENER.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (VO): The automat
cordless pencil sharpener from Sunbea
VIDEO
CUT TO FEMALE PENCIL JUMPING NTO MR. SHARPY.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Mr. Sharpy turn
SFX: MR. SHARPY SHARPENING.
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Oooooooo!

Figure 7.4

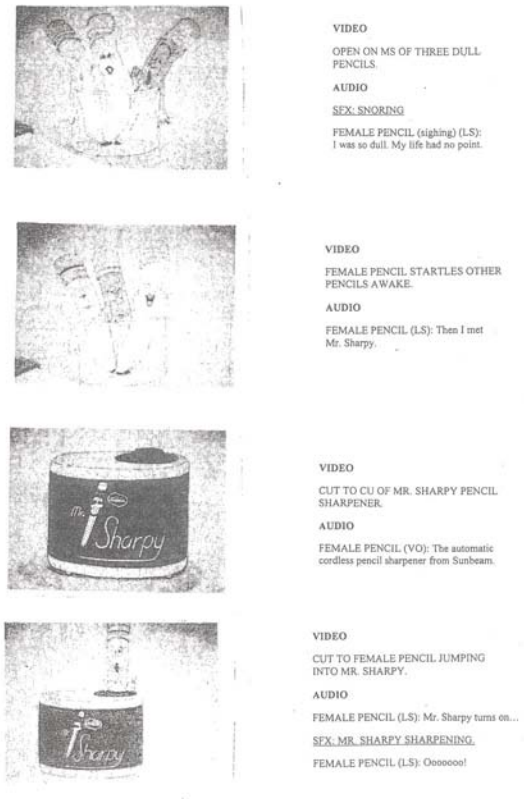

VIDEO
OPEN ON MS OF THREE DULL PENCILS.
AUDIO
SFX: SNORING
FEMALE PENCIL (sighing) (LS):
I was so dull. My life had no point.
VIDEO
FEMALE PENCIL STARTLES OTHER PENCILS AWAKE.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Then I met Mr. Sharpy.
VIDEO
CUT TO CU OF MR. SHARPY PENCIL SHARPENER.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (VO): The automatic cordless pencil sharpener from Sunbeam.
VIDEO
CUT TO FEMALE PENCIL JUMPING INTO MR. SHARPY.
AUDIO
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Mr. Sharpy turns on...
SFX: MR. SHARPY SHARPENING.
FEMALE PENCIL (LS): Oooooooo!

Figure 7.5

However this works out, the storyboard is a further visualization of the commercial that the copywriter and art director have in their heads. It takes the script to the next level by actually visualizing the key scenes that are already in the script. When I worked at JWT, we had five renders (what you would call illustrators) who turned the rough storyboards that the art directors would give them into full-color, tightly rendered masterpieces. Yes, masterpieces, and I don't use that word lightly. Each of these renders (render comes from the word "rendering," which is a very tight drawing of something) had their specialty. Some did food storyboards, say for Kraft. Others did storyboards for personal-care products such as conditioners, shavers, etc. Still others were known for bringing the proposed talent depicted in the commercial to life with wonderful renderings of faces—sad, smiling, laughing, etc. It was a real art. Some of these storyboards were so good, in fact, that clients fell in love with them and, once the actual commercial was shot, they felt let down and disappointed! This is no small problem, and can be even worse when the art director creates a "steal-a-matic" instead of a traditionally drawn storyboard. Here, the storyboard visuals are actual photos rather than drawings or there's no storyboard at all, but rather the commercial as the writer and art director envision it using clips from movies, other commercials, or even video games—all with full sound. The idea behind steal-a-matics is that they more accurately reflect what the writer and art director have in mind and, therefore, will be an easier sell to the agency's upper management and/or client. The trouble is the tighter the storyboard, the greater the chance your client will fall in love with it, rather than the finished commercial After spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on the finished commercial, that's a big problem! In general, a storyboard should be a professional representation of the commercial, but not a work of art in its own right. It's a fine line, but one you need to be aware of. Beware of storyboards that steal the thunder of the finished commercial.

But now let's get back to the purpose of the storyboard in the first place. Its purpose is to help the client visualize the commercial. Writers and art directors are great at visualizing a finished commercial in their heads. But those outside the business—even outside the creative department—are not. They need help. And it's the storyboard that's going to give it to them. Just as in the script, we are not visualizing every shot or even every scene. As I touched on earlier, we are visualizing only the *key* scenes that collectively serve as a good *representation* of the commercial. So, the more complicated the commercial that we have in our minds, the more key frames that will be needed in the storyboard. But there is a limit. Otherwise the storyboard just gets too complicated and, really, ridiculous. If a commercial is that complicated, it would be better to do a simpler storyboard and then *also* show the client a clip or several clips as an example of how you see the finished commercial. Following this logic, I'd say a storyboard should have a minimum of 6 frames and a maximum of 12 or 13. This is based on my own experience and, of course, is a bit arbitrary, but it's a good general guide.

Just as the copywriter and art director worked out the script together, so, too, will they work out the storyboard. It's a team effort. In any good agency, copywriters and art directors work together. Some art directors are even involved in radio. As we learned earlier in the book, this has been the norm since the late 1960s, and most everyone believes it results in better work.

Copywriters and art directors perfectly complement each other—what one can't do the other can.

So the copywriter and art director will work out the storyboard together. Often the writer will be standing over the art director's shoulder and pointing out things as the art director roughs out the board. There's a lot of give and take—a lot like playing a mental tennis game, back and forth, feeding off each other's ideas. And this goes on to such a point that it is hard to figure out who thought of what, how, or when. It all blends together because it's a partnership. You live or die together. All that's important is that what comes out of that room is great.

Now, what about format for storyboards? I've included three sample formats here (Figure 7.3–7.5). At JWT we worked horizontally—six frames on a board, three on top and three on the bottom. You can also work vertically. When you work vertically, there are two ways to go. You can put the frames down the middle of the board and put the video instructions on the left and the audio instructions and copy on the right. This resembles the split-page script format. In the other vertical approach, you put the frames flush left and then the video and audio instructions and the copy are to the right. All of the principles that we have already outlined for the script apply here. Video is always in caps, sound effects are denoted with SFX, the effect is in all caps and underlined, etc. When you use the horizontal and frames-on-the-left vertical formats, video instructions are on top, audio below them. I have fully fleshed out the horizontal board and it's identical to the actual board we used for the spot. For the two vertical examples, I only fleshed out the first four frames, which should be enough to give you an idea how they work.

PRODUCING THE COMMERCIAL

If you're writing TV, you should understand how important production will be to how your commercial will turn out. Like a script, the storyboard is just a blueprint for the commercial. No consumer is ever going to see the storyboard. So if the commercial doesn't work in its final form—on film—then it just doesn't work. That's why the *production* of the commercial is so vital. *Who* produces the commercial from the agency and, in turn, who that agency producer chooses to actually direct the commercial, are vital decisions that affect how your commercial turns out. The question is simply this—whose vision is going to make it to the screen? And the answer is equally simple—whoever has the final say—the creative control. That's whose vision will make it to the screen. You want to make sure it's *yours*.

That's why I used to produce my own commercials, usually with the art director, but occasionally with the agency producer. More than anyone, it's the writer and art director who "sweat blood" to create and sell the commercial, so naturally they want their vision to make it to the screen. That only happens if you have creative control. Control over the myriad of decisions affecting the production of any commercial—the production house, the director, the casting, locations, music, announcer, and, most important of all, editing. When you have control over all that, your vision will make it to the screen. In fact, once you choose

the director who's going to actually shoot the spot (commercial directors are independent vendors who aren't employed by the agency) and the talent (on-camera actors, voice-over announcer, etc.), you're about 75 percent locked into how the commercial will turn out. The other 25 percent will be the quality of the actual performances, getting all the necessary shots and, most of all, the editing. The copywriter, art director, and agency producer don't actually edit the commercial, just as they don't actually direct it. But if they are the designated agency producers, they make all the creative decisions regarding those edits. There can be hundreds of them—from choosing among different takes, to how the whole spot is pieced together, to directing the voice-over talent, to deciding on music, what kind, where should it go, sound effects, etc., etc. All those decisions will determine whether the commercial you wrote turns out great, good, or horrible. It's very scary. The copywriter and art director don't have the kind of control in TV that they do in print. Once you choose the suppliers or vendors who make up your creative team, you can only hope they will add, rather than detract, from what you have in your head.

On that topic, while I have emphasized how I liked to be in control of the spot, you also have to know when to let go. The vendors you have chosen to help produce this commercial are specialists. Often, they will have ideas you haven't considered and don't agree with. You have to at least hear them out. You need to get your arms around your suppliers/vendors, challenge them, and make them an integral part of the creative process, just as we did with the director of the American Cancer Society commercial I described earlier. They are specialists, and they might work on a hundred commercials a year, so they have the "gut." Sometimes you have to walk away from your preconceptions, trust their gut, and take a leap of faith. If you try to shoot your storyboard verbatim, it will be stilted. You have to know when to let go of your "baby," so that it might soar. It's tough. But as long as you have final creative control, you have nothing to worry about. Ultimately, the commercial will be as you and your art director envision it. In order to get to that, however, you have to know when to trust the instincts of the specialists you've hired.

PRODUCTION CURVE BALLS

A couple of personal experiences are worth mentioning here. Sometimes, it's just not possible for you to be in control of the commercial you've written. One reason might be that you're young. The Daisy Shaver I mentioned earlier was my first commercial. I was only 25 and way down in the pecking order at JWT. Because it was JWT policy that only two creatives went on a production shoot, I lost out to a very senior agency producer and my art director partner, who was also very senior. I was devastated. For all of the reasons I set out above, I wanted to be there—in this case, Los Angeles. Rather than be left out of all those important production decisions, I decided to take my vacation at the same time and go out to Los Angeles myself. It might not have been politically wise, but I just had to be there. I never regretted it. Just as I explained above, there

were hundreds of large and small decisions that were made on the set that I was part of. If I had stayed in Chicago, I would have been left out of all of them.

Other times, the talent is in control of the commercial that you actually have written. That happens usually only when the talent is a celebrity. I worked with two—"Mean Joe" Greene, an All-Pro linebacker in the 1970s, and Farah Fawcett. When we got on the set, it turned out that Mean Joe was tired of being referred to by that name and "suggested" we substitute "sweet" Joe Greene. Neither he nor his agent had said a word about this before the day of the shoot. Then, that day they launched it on us. We didn't like it, didn't think it made the spot as strong, but what could we do? We're in New York, dozens of people are ready to shoot, and there's just no going back. We had to take Greene's suggestion. The spot still worked, but wasn't as strong. Lastly, Farah Fawcett held the trump card, but this time I didn't mind her demand at all. She was donating her time to the American Cancer Society (for avoiding skin cancer) and she wanted to shoot in Mexico instead of Malibu because she said Malibu was too cold in January. So I and my art director partner wound up in Mexico for a week in the middle of January and we have the talent to thank for it.

Sometimes, no matter how much you have planned and how hard you have worked to maintain control, you are *out of control*. And there's nothing you can do about it. In those situations, you have to remain professional, collect yourself, alter your preconceptions of *your* commercial, and just pray the advertising gods are watching over you.

COMMERCIAL GENRE

Just as many feature films fall into genres, such as horror, drama, animated, romantic comedy, or action-adventure, so do commercials. If you're a copywriter who writes TV, it's important to understand the genres that are available to you. As I said in the print section, your work is always better if it springs organically from your unconscious mind. That's where all the best, award-winning ideas come from. That's even more true in TV. But, you also learned, that the unconscious mind is an unruly beast that works on its own schedule. So there will be times when it just doesn't deliver. That's when being familiar with commercial genres can be a lifesaver. Like featured films, when you are writing a genre script, the genre in which you are working demands certain dictates. The horror genre dictates certain things be included in the script. The same is true of a romantic comedy, a heroic action film, and so on. Commercial genres work the same way. Once you understand the dictates of the different genres, you and your art director can fall back on them when an idea doesn't jump into your minds organically. The results probably won't be award winning, but advertising is extremely deadline oriented and sometimes you're forced to do respectable, professional work, but not your best work.

Okay, so that's why knowing the genres available to you can be such a lifesaver. Here is a list of the most common ones:

Presenter: The classic and overused "talking head"
Demo: A visual demonstration of the brand's key USP

Testimonial: By consumers, an expert such as a doctor, a sports star, etc.
Product-as-hero: Only your brand is onscreen to the exclusion of nearly everything else
Vignettes: Five- or six-second scenes strung together that highlight either the problem the brand is going to solve or the brand's solutions to the problem, often humorous
Slice-of-life: Talent in the commercial talk with each other as they would in real life but it's about your brand
Lifestyle: Quick scenes with music and lyrics over the scenes
Animation: Either traditional or computer

Sometimes two or more of these genres are in the same commercial. For example, in the presenter genre, the presenter could also be giving a testimonial, so it's a doctor or sports hero, etc.

CGI (i.e., special effects) does not count as a genre. It can be used in any of the genres to enhance them, but it is not a genre in and of itself. The Old Spice commercial I referenced before with the guy coming out of the shower, walking over to a boat, and finally onto a horse is ultimately a presenter commercial, but CGI and the special effects make it an award-winner. In fact, just think how boring that commercial would be without the CGI—just another presenter blabbing at us.

Speaking of that, of all the genres listed, by far the most prevalent is the presenter genre. And it often results in the worst commercials. Nothing but talk, talk, talk. Unless, you're going to throw a twist into it, as they did in the Old Spice spot, beware. As a rule, the more boring the genre, the more you need to spice it up with special effects, animation—something! Those devices elevate the presenter genre and can make it hugely enjoyable to watch. If you're going to have what amounts to a "talking head," at least try to infuse it with some originality. In order to become proficient in writing a commercial in a particular genre, you first have to study each genre and analyze what makes it "tick." In my classes, we look at hundreds of commercials, usually on YouTube. You need to do the same thing. Studying what's already out there is an education in and of itself. And it's free. Go on YouTube and begin watching commercials and identify which of the genres the commercial falls into. Along the way, notice how the commercials within each genre unfold in similar ways. That's what I have referred to above as the "dictates of the genre." Once you become familiar with these dictates, you'll be able to take any consumer benefit and related copy points and put them into any one of the above genres.

When you have a commercial to do, the genre you and your art director choose can make all the difference. Here's an example from my personal experience. We had to do a commercial for Sunbeam's Mr. Sharpy pencil sharpener (Figure 7.7). The key consumer benefit was that this new pencil sharpener was cordless. My art director and I couldn't come up with anything clever. Then, the art director suggested we do an animated spot, and that was our eureka moment! Once we had chosen the animation genre, the ideas exploded. Now we had *fantasy* to work with. Now, what was looking to be a really boring spot, was nothing but fun, fun, fun. Because of the animation, we were able to make the pencil into a "female" and Mr. Sharpy into

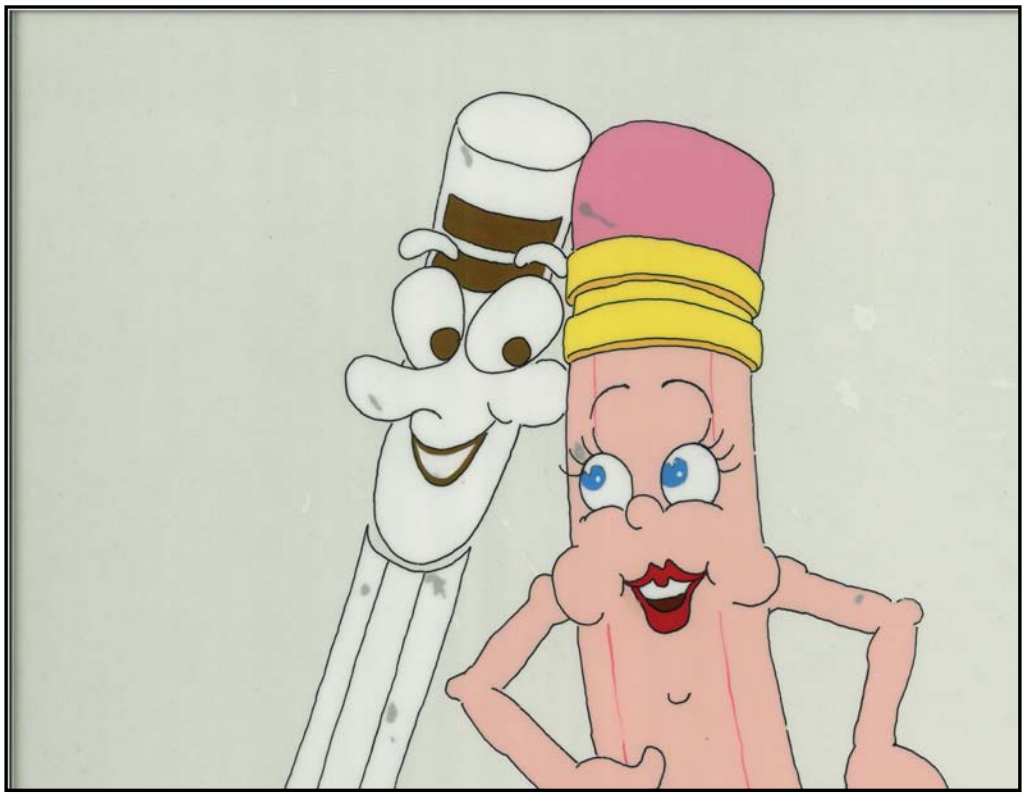


Figure 7.7

her "heartthrob." Now, we had a *love story*. She falls in love with Mr. Sharpy because he gives her life a "point." And, because he's cordless, he can go anywhere with her. What was looking to be one of the worst commercials I had ever written suddenly turned into a Clio finalist—all because of our choice of genre.

LIMBERING-UP EXERCISES IN TV

What I have for you here are three different kinds of exercises that give you practice writing three very different kinds of commercials.

1. The all-visual, killer-line commercial
2. The persuasive-essay commercial
3. The genre-driven commercial

Exercise #1

THE ALL-VISUAL, KILLER-LINE COMMERCIAL

The brands in many product categories are at absolute parity, by which I mean there is little to no difference among them. If you remember from our section on strategy, this situation most often dictates a brand strategy based on emotional appeals. The all-visual, killer-line commercials pair up very well with emotional strategies. The reason is because by choosing an emotional strategy we have recognized that we have nothing to actually say about our brand. It does not have a USP—or even a modified "2A" USP—and there is no opportunity for positioning. The last strategic card we have to play is the emotional appeal. If you remember from Part 1, once we have chosen an emotional strategy, it's no longer about the *brand*, now it's all about the *consumer* and his or her *meaning system* (i.e., what's important to the consumer). So, in the commercial what we need to do is *reflect* that meaning system *back at our targeted consumers*. The all-visual, killer-line commercial does this very well. Your job here is not to depict the *brand* in the commercial, but to depict the *consumers* of that brand engaged in something they find interesting, engaging, rewarding, fun, whatever. The campaign for 5 Gum comes to mind as an example. Find it online and take a look. Who is the target market? I'd say it's very young—12 to 24. The commercials depict young men and women about midway in this age range and show them in a very cool, alternate reality. They are experiencing a *rush*. It's exciting, scary, and fun! What does the 12-to-24 target market want from life? A rush. Excitement. A bit of risk. And most of all—fun. Right? So what have we said about 5 Gum? Nothing. What we've done is *reflect* our target consumers' meaning system (excitement, a rush, risk, fun) *back at them*. Then we've *tied* 5 Gum to that meaning system—by bringing the brand in at the end. This campaign isn't about 5 Gum. It's about the *consumers* we want to *buy* 5 Gum. The great majority of the commercials my students bring into my classes fall into this type. The reason is that they are primarily entertainment, because the brands in them have nothing of consequence to say about themselves.

So in practicing the all-visual, killer-line commercial, decide who your targeted consumers are and what is important to them. Then do a commercial that *reflects* that back at them, tying in the brand at the very end with the killer line. So if your target market is young men, they might be very interested in video games. Okay, reflect that back at them. Maybe they're actually *inside* a video game, for example. Then find a way to connect the gaming activity they love to your brand by tying it in at the end.

Here's how you can practice doing this type of commercial. In my classes, we do an exciting, fun commercial but we don't decide for which brand it is until we are finished. You can do the same. I start things off with an opening scene of four white horses racing through a misty forest pulling a carriage. Then, I ask the students, "What's next?" Every class comes up with a different story. We don't care about the brand. We're just trying to do an exciting, engaging film that also happens to be a commercial. Along the way, we reveal who's driving the carriage. Then who's in the

carriage. Then who or what is chasing the carriage. Once the story is resolved, then, and only then, do we decide what the brand should be and the killer line. Sometimes the brand winds up being McDonald's. Other times it's for a GPS tool. It doesn't really matter. What matters is that you have done a clever, fresh, and memorable commercial that reflects your target market's meaning system. The brand is just along for the ride. So in this exercise, just think of clever 30-second films. When you're happy with them, find brands to tie in at the end. And, lastly, think of killer lines that wrap up the action and tie that action back to the brands that you've chosen.

Exercise #2

THE PERSUASIVE-ESSAY COMMERCIAL

Now it's time to practice commercials that are completely opposite to the all-visual, killer-line commercials. Just as emotional strategies lead to all-visual, killer-line executions, USP strategies lead to what I am calling "persuasive-essay commercials." I'm calling them that because they require copy that's a lot like the body copy in a print ad. You'll remember back in the print section I wrote that the body copy in a print ad is really a miniature persuasive essay. The USP strategy—including the modified "2a"—assumes a brand differentiation in the product category. Therefore, in the execution of that USP strategy, you need to highlight that differentiation and persuade your consumers to buy your brand because of that difference. The client, and even your creative director, is not going to be comfortable with just one line of copy at the end. They're going to want you, as the copywriter, to press this "advantage" the brand has in the product category, even if *you* think it's inconsequential. Copywriters and art directors *execute* strategies, but seldom originate them. So whether you agree with the strategy or not, you have to be a professional and write a commercial that makes the most of the USP they have given you. In other words, they want some "sell" copy in there. This doesn't have to be a complete disaster for your commercial. When you're required to make some copy points throughout your commercial, remember what I said earlier—it's just like writing a caption to a still photo. So keep your writing *lean*. Don't overwrite because the images are already "speaking volumes." One word here or a phrase there are all you need to reinforce the images. This is called audio-video reinforcement. And this is the perfect type of commercial in which to use this powerfully persuasive technique. Audio-video reinforcement is using a word or phrase that corresponds to and reinforces what your target market is seeing. It's how you take the miniature persuasive essay from print and make it work in TV.

As an example, go back to the Grips commercial I described earlier. Many of those points bear repeating here. The leader in work gloves—Wells Lamont—was coming

out with a new work glove called Grips. Its USP is that it was the first work glove that was curved like the human hand, for a grip that just won't give. Notice the feature-benefit, one-two punch in that sentence. Visually, we needed a spot that was highly introductory—"the second coming" kind of feel. So here's the video part of the commercial: to dramatic music, the hand rises up from the bottom of the screen; magically the Grips glove fits over it perfectly; the gloved hand turns sideways, and a dotted line follows its unique precurved design; finally the gloved hand magically leaps out at us as it grabs a rope from thin air and the super comes on: "Grips. From Wells Lamont." Now, keeping that visual story in mind, here's the copy I wrote. Notice these three things—the writing is sparse; there is strong audio-video reinforcement; and the copy is a persuasive, logical argument why consumers should be impressed with Grips' USP.

The human hand. It's not flat. It's curved. And now, finally, there's a glove built around it. Grips. From Wells Lamont. The only all-purpose glove with the patented precurved design. For a comfortable grip … that just won't give. Grips. From Wells Lamont.

Look how lean that copy is—just 44 words—yet it's a very persuasive story that's told simply and logically. All along the way, the words reinforce what we are seeing visually—a classic use of audio-video reinforcement. The highly introductory visuals are perfectly paired with the highly introductory music and voice-over copy to create a powerful one-two persuasive punch. This is the kind of commercial you will probably write most often. I tell my students that these types of commercials are the bread and butter for most agencies. The kind of work that keeps the doors open. Just because it sells hard, does not mean it can't entertain. Yes, I said entertain. It entertains with its drama and powerful simplicity. It's a commercial that's pleasant and interesting to watch, yet still makes a powerful persuasive pitch for Grips and its USP. As a professional, you have to be as good at writing this type of commercial as you are writing the all-visual, killer-line commercials.

So, now more work for you. Just as you wrote hundreds of commercials that told their stories with just images and one killer line, now practice writing commercials like this Grips spot. Still come up with a compelling visual story, but overlay it with copy that reinforces your visuals and makes a memorable persuasive argument for your brand. Here's an idea that will get you started. Go back to the body-copy section and translate the Clorox ad into a 30-second commercial that argues why Clorox whitens better than OxiClean. Keep practicing this by finding similar print ads and writing TV versions of them. As before, do hundreds of them. This exercise will hone your skills as a powerfully persuasive copywriter that any agency would want to hire.

Exercise #3

THE GENRE-DRIVEN COMMERCIAL

Now, let's get back to the genre-driven commercial. In order to practice writing in the various genre I have listed, try this very telling and instructive exercise. Take the copy points I gave you for the Daisy jingle and use it to write a commercial for Daisy in *each* of the genres listed earlier. You have the same copy points to include in the commercial, but each commercial you write will be in a different genre, with all the required dictates of that genre. After this assignment, I think you'll see the creative power at your disposal in using a genre to create a commercial. It's not going to be your best work, but no one does their best work all the time. Knowing how to write in the different genres is an acceptable plan B when your unconscious mind doesn't deliver. To give yourself more practice with this, do what we did in the persuasive-essay commercial and just find print ads and translate them into TV commercials in all of the genres. This exercise will get you very adept at using genre to drive your writing. It's an indispensable tool when deadlines loom and your unconscious mind doesn't deliver.

WHAT ABOUT THE POSITIONING STRATEGY?

If emotional strategies lead to the all-visual, killer-line commercials, and USP strategies lead to persuasive-essay commercials, what do positioning strategies lead to? The simple answer is that they could lead to either. In the Avis #2 and the Uncola campaigns, I'd say those positioning strategies led to persuasive-essay commercials. But, on the other hand, I'd say that the "It's Miller Time" and "The Weekends Were Made for Michelob" campaigns are not about the brands, but rather about the consumers who drink them. So those campaigns are a lot more like the all-visual, killer-line executions.

Ironically, the *less* we have to say about our brand, the *more* creative the commercials tend to be. The reason is because we've got nothing else! However, a brand that has a powerful and compelling USP will often dictate a simple exposition of its benefits to the consumer target market.

CINEMA

Commercials shown in movie theaters are much more common abroad than in the United States. Abroad, cinema advertising is a major medium, whereas in the United States it's minor. Everything that we have just learned for TV applies equally to commercials shown in cinemas. In fact, they're often identical to those shown on TV and online. So it's nothing more than a TV commercial played in a movie theater. There is one difference about cinema advertising, however,

that you should keep in mind. Because the audience has already paid to see the feature film, they don't feel they should have to watch commercials. As a result, the commercials that appear in cinemas need to be particularly entertaining and add to the theater-going experience rather than detract from it. If you know in advance that your commercial will have a sizeable cinema media budget, be sure the commercial adds to the entertainment experience of the audience. Other than that, all of the copywriting principles you've learned for TV apply to cinema.

Chapter Eight

Wordsmithing Out-of-Home

In advertising, out-of-home is considered a medium. The reason is because the word "medium" in our business connotes a vehicle by which the advertising message is delivered to the consumer target market. Most of us think of billboards when we think of out-of-home, but there are many other vehicles (sometimes literally) that can deliver the out-of-home message. In addition to billboards, there are subways, subway stations, buses, bus shelters, taxis (outside and inside the cab), airports (think of those long corridors we walk down to get *everywhere*), and peculiar out-of-home messages like those projected on the sides of buildings, messages on sidewalks and manhole covers, as well as "spectaculars," which are one-of-a-kind billboards that you see in places like Times Square. This last group of "peculiars" is often included with guerrilla marketing—the ultimate dumping ground for advertising forms and messages that don't seem to fit anywhere else.

Out-of-home has become a much more important medium now that consumers are able to zap away commercials with their DVRs and similar devices. As we discussed at the very beginning of this book, companies are nothing without their brands. Their brands enable them to charge super-premium prices for goods and services that otherwise would be worth much less. In turn, brands need brand advertising to create the brand personality that leads consumers to believe that advertised brands are worth more than unadvertised store brands, private brands, and bulk goods. Finally, the last card in this house of cards is that the advertisers must be assured that their brand advertising is actually being seen and heard by consumers. DVRs and similar "commercial zappers" take this house of cards and bring it crashing down.

Out-of-home was always considered a supporting medium for TV. Now, because of the DVR, it's a star in its own right. That might be a bit of an overstatement. But as technology enables consumers to escape brand messages on TV, more advertisers are turning to out-of-home to supplement their TV buys.

THE BIG CAVEAT OF OUT-OF-HOME

Finally, I found a place to use the word "caveat," which I love a lot. Better yet, it actually makes sense here. The big caveat of out-of-home as a medium is *brevity*. Think of consumers when they are out-of-home—they are always *moving*. They are moving in their cars, moving on their feet, and moving on airport people movers. Moving. Seldom do we have a captive audience in out-of-home, but it does happen—you're stuck in traffic, you're stuck in the backseat of a cab, you're stuck on a bus or subway, you're stuck at the curb waiting for the light to change. But mostly, you are *moving*. That fact dictates brevity in your out-of-home message. Here is the medium where the importance of visual thinking moves to the nth degree.

A good way to approach out-of-home is to think of it as a print ad without the body copy. All of the principles we learned earlier in this book about headlines, visual thinking, the special relationship between a headline and its visual, etc., they all apply here. Maybe even more so because our consumers are not sitting in one place as they are with print. They are moving. Out-of-home needs to communicate quickly, and that's why it needs to communicate primarily visually—because "a picture is worth a thousand words." As we learned in the print chapter, the visual is the element in a print ad that grabs consumers by the collar and drags them in. Whereas words take time to digest, visuals communicate instantly. So visuals are where we want to be in out-of-home. All great advertising is visual, and that goes double for out-of-home. As a result, out-of-home is an excellent place for what I have called in this book—"super visuals." Visuals that are metaphors for the consumer benefit—what we are promising consumers they will get if they buy this brand.

In this regard, one of my favorite out-of-home campaigns is for Corona beer (Figure 8.1). I've included a couple of examples here. You'll notice there are no words in these billboards. None are necessary. These are visual metaphors for the consumer benefit of drinking Corona. Is Corona selling beer? No, beer is beer is beer. Corona is selling Mexico and what that means to American consumers—beaches, relaxation, sun, fun. Through years of brilliant advertising, Corona now "owns" all of those things in consumers' minds. All it has to do is reference it in its outdoor and we get it. That's why these outdoor boards for Corona are so effective. Fun, visual metaphors for Corona's consumer benefit—beach, sun, fun—are incredibly involving and memorable.

But not every brand is going to have so much going for it. And words will be necessary in many out-of-home campaigns. When that is the case, however, make sure you remember one key word—*brevity*. If you have to use a headline, keep it as brief as possible. The rule of thumb is about seven words or fewer. I'm not sure how they came up with this number, probably from lots of research over the years. Obviously, there are so many variables here that it almost makes the "rule" useless. It will depend on all sorts of things—the brand itself (Coke versus Nikon, for example), how powerful the visual that accompanies the headline, the actual size and complexity of the words used in the ad, and so forth. There are lots of things to consider, but in general keep your headlines as short as possible and, whenever possible, come up with super visuals—visual metaphors for the benefit—that make words unnecessary.

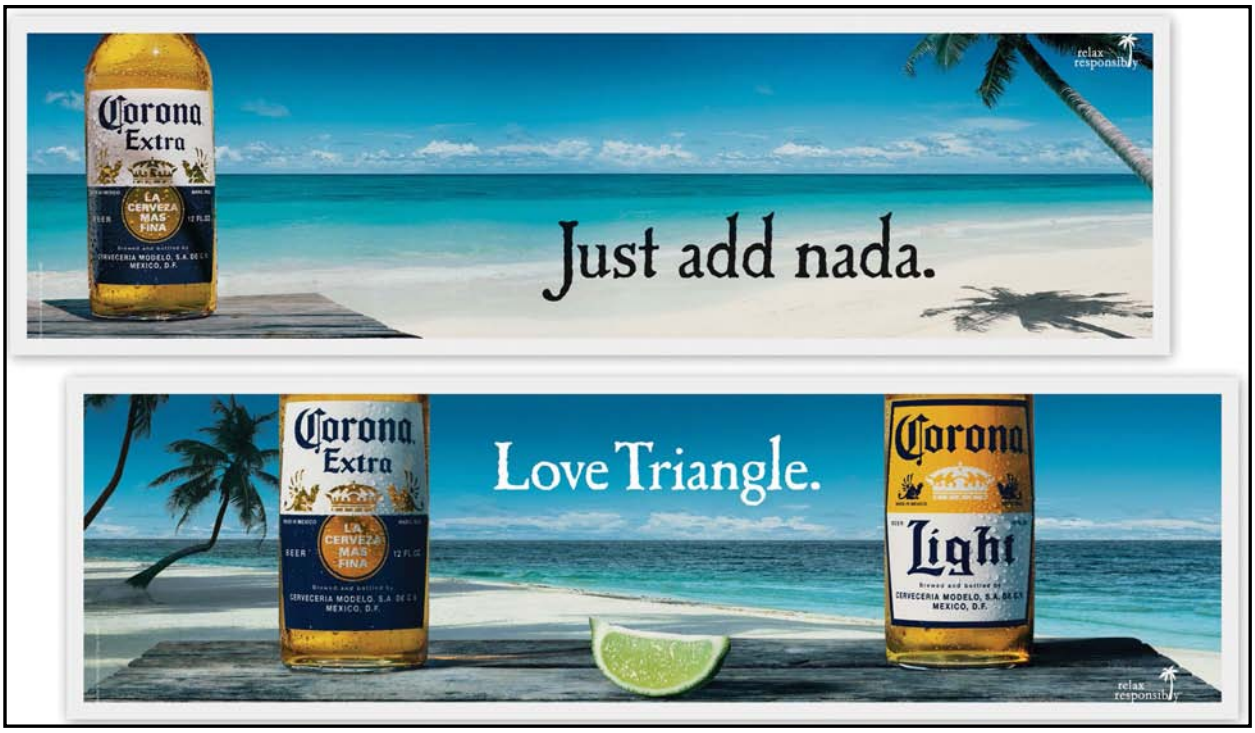


Figure 8.1

You can learn a lot from great out-of-home campaigns like Corona. But you might be able to learn even more from horrible campaigns. Keep your "student hat" on when you're driving or commuting and take note of the out-of-home campaigns. I think you'll see that the biggest mistake they make is jamming too many words, too many visuals, and too many thoughts into one execution. All of those competing words, visuals, and thoughts will cancel each other out and communicate *nothing*.

The second big mistake in out-of-home is small type. As I said before, you must always assume that your targeted consumers are *moving* when they see your out-of-home. Occasionally they're stuck in traffic or waiting for a bus or train, but mostly when they experience out-of-home they are *moving*. When you're moving, you can't read tiny type. It has to be large enough to literally read at a glance.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: all great advertising is simple, visually compelling, and completely focused on the consumer benefit. That goes triple for out-of-home. Yet, it seems no one is listening. Maybe the creatives are just weak or don't care about doing great work. Or maybe the clients are intent on "getting their money's worth" by jamming as much into an execution as possible. Ironically, clients who jam everything into your advertising—out-of-home and other media—wind up simply *wasting* their money. Consumers don't want to *work* to get the information they need from advertising. They don't want complicated; they want simple, easy, quick. Advertising that tries to tell consumers too much in too complicated of a way in a misguided effort to "get its money's worth" will fail. Whatever the reason for these horrible out-of-home campaigns, the communication result is the same—nil.

"VIOLATING" THE BOARD

Before we move on to the digital revolution in outdoor, I have to emphasize that the great majority of out-of-home is still analog. You'll usually only find digital out-of-home in large metro markets such as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, etc. So as a creative, you'll often have to do an analog version and a digital version of the same creative. When you're working with analog billboards, one of the great ways to grab attention is by "violating" the traditional rectangular shape of outdoor boards. This can be done with extenders that extend the board in one or more directions. It can also be done by using three-dimensional elements on the board. Here are a few examples of each. I was just on a road trip and I saw this board on an interstate. It was a state cheese board, and it was promoting Swiss cheese. They added a triangular extender to the top of the board so they could show a triangular wedge of Swiss cheese. The board really "popped" on the highway for a lot of reasons, but, most of all, because it *wasn't* rectangular; it was triangular. The point I'm making is that the very nature of extending the billboard and violating its traditional shape will grab a lot of attention. Of course, it's going to cost more. But it's really going to capture attention. Here's a completely different example of how to use extenders. We did a campaign for Brookfield Zoo in Chicago when they had just completed habitats that brought the animals much closer to the zoo patrons. To highlight this benefit, we wanted to show the animals "leaping" off the board. But the board is static, so how do you accomplish that? Well, what we did was have the heads of the animals violate the billboards. So to give you an example, the gorilla's head and hands extended over the top of the rectangular board, as did the long neck and head of the giraffe and the long body of a snake. I think this is a great use of extenders. First of all, all of the boards we did really "popped" on the interstate. You couldn't ignore them and you couldn't forget them. Secondly, they perfectly paid off the zoo's strategy of bringing patrons closer to the animals—particularly crucial for kids who are the zoo's primary target. Just imagine how boring those boards would be without the animals extending over the top. That's why extenders are worth their weight in gold. If you have to come up with creative for analog boards, always violate them. It's well worth the money.

A second way to violate is to use three-dimensional elements in the board. The best example I can think of is for Chick-fil-A. The boards have three-dimensional cows interacting with the traditional rectangular board in different ways. The clever and fun headline is something along the lines of "eat more chicken." Of course, the cows have a huge vested interest in that proposition, and that's lots of fun and very memorable. Once again, try to imagine those boards without the three-dimensional cows. They would still be solid work, but not nearly as attention-getting or memorable. That's the value of violating the board in traditional outdoor analog. As I said before, studying advertising is really easy because it pervades our lives, and now with the Internet you can find literally thousands of examples of great outdoor boards. In fact, there are creative awards given just for clever out-of-home. So I'd go online and find more examples of how to cleverly use extenders, three-dimensional elements, and other attention-getting devices in your outdoor.

BILLBOARDS—BACK FROM THE GRAVE

The clever analog billboards we've just discussed are unfortunately the exception rather than the rule. For whatever reason—lack of money, lack of creativity, heavy-handed clients—out-of-home advertising usually falls flat. Then, as the Internet became an integral part of our lives, billboards—the most common form of out-of home—began to look deathly *analog*. What was once a vibrant support medium for television began to look just plain old-fashioned. Its salvation? The digital billboard. The very technology that dated the billboard in the first place wound up saving it. Plasma screens started small and expensive, but soon were huge and cheap. So, the outdoor companies began replacing paper and wood billboards in large metro areas with plasma screens. And an advertising medium was reinvented—better than ever. The plasma screen enabled out-of-home media companies to create billboards digitally, post to them remotely, and then sell the exact *same* billboard to dozens of advertisers instead of just one at a time. How? Well, don't forget that each digital billboard contains many individual billboards that then *rotate* in their exposure to consumers. How *often* they are on the screen and for how *long* are all carefully calculated by the outdoor companies and appropriate prices attached.

Wow! Talk about a godsend. And the good news got even better. It costs outdoor media companies a lot less to create and post digital billboards than analog ones because it's not as labor-intensive. Just think how expensive it was to send out two people to put up *each* analog billboard at *each* location in *every* metropolitan market. Then multiply that number hundreds of times. Now that's redundancy! Instead, ad agencies send the digital billboard to the outdoor media companies and they upload it to the appropriate locations and, presto, they're finished. Whereas before their quality control was at the mercy of the individuals who put up each analog billboard, now they have complete quality control over their product, and at a much lower cost.

So the plasma screen—and the digital billboard that resulted from it—came along at a very good time for advertisers and out-of-home media companies. Because of DVRs and other similar devices, advertisers needed a medium for their advertising that consumers couldn't zap away. And this digital revolution in out-of-home is just beginning. Someday, all out-of-home will be digital. Imagine digital screens—inside and out—on buses, subways, taxis, stations, shelters, and anyplace else we can put a plasma screen. What appeared to be a morbid medium that creatives shunned is now rich with creative possibilities. Because the U.S. Department of Transportation prohibits movement *within* each digital billboard, the creative principles of doing great outdoor apply equally to digital outdoor—compelling visuals, short (or nonexistent) headlines, and extremely focused and simple design. And, ironically, a digital outdoor board in one respect is a tougher creative assignment than an analog board because we can't violate a digital board as we can an analog board, so our single best way to grab attention and memorability is lost. Oh, well. The advertising gods give and they take away.

LIMBERING-UP EXERCISES

There are a lot of ways to go here. I have my copywriting class choose a print ad, identify the consumer benefit of the ad (whatever they can deduce), and then do an out-of-home campaign that *extends* the print to out-of-home executions. Or, you could do what we did in radio and TV—just take a print ad and translate it into an out-of-home campaign. I'd focus your efforts on outdoor billboards because that part of out-of-home is the most dominant. But if you have a great idea that works elsewhere, go with it. The key part of this exercise is to hone your visual thinking, particularly your ability to think of super visuals—visual metaphors for the consumer benefit. Try to make your visuals *so* powerful that they "speak" for you, making a headline unnecessary. But, don't delude yourself. If your visual just is not of that caliber, that's okay, but just be sure you marry it with a headline. If you do wind up using a headline, all the devices and principles we learned for print apply. The only difference is that there is no body copy. So your headline has to do *two* things—communicate the consumer benefit (whatever you can deduce from the print ad; no big deal here, just make an educated guess) *and* do it in a clever, memorable, creative way.

Chapter Nine

Wordsmithing on the Internet

THE TWO HATS OF THE INTERNET

If you remember, way back at the beginning of this book, I wrote that the Internet wore two "hats" in terms of marketing communications. The first hat is in its role as a medium that delivers advertising messages to target markets. As such, it's just like any other advertising medium—TV, radio, print, or out-of-home. If you remember, the key attribute that distinguishes advertising from the other seven marketing-communications vehicles is that the advertising message is always delivered via a *medium*. If the message is *not* delivered by a medium, then it must be a marketing-communications vehicle *other* than advertising—public relations, sales promotion, direct mail, events, trade shows, collateral, or … interactive.

The second hat the Internet wears is an *interactive* one, in which the Internet functions as its own marketing-communications tool or vehicle on the same level as the other MARCOM vehicles: advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct mail, trade shows, events, and collateral. Using marketing communications in social media is a good example of this interactive role.

First, let's address the Internet as a medium, just like TV, radio, print, and out-of-home. When the Internet is functioning as a medium, it delivers its message with no expectation of interaction with its targeted consumers. In contrast, when the Internet is functioning as an interactive marketing-communications tool, it not only expects interaction, it *promotes* it. This most often happens on the company or brand's website. But increasingly it is happening in social media—YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Foursquare, Tumblr, and any number of other interactive sites that pop up weekly. Here, the marketing-communications objective of the Internet is to *interact* with its targeted consumers and become their "friend" (literally, in the case of Facebook), "part of the conversation," and *relevant* in their lives.

THE INTERNET AS AN ADVERTISING MEDIUM

Let's start here because we've learned that a message is an *advertising* message *only* if it is delivered via a medium—TV, radio, print (newspapers and magazines), out-of-home, or Internet. If it's delivered by other means—say the Postal Service—then it is one of the other marketing-communications vehicles or tools—in this case, direct mail. But it's *not* advertising. Furthermore, within *this* subdiscipline of advertising, this book is only concerned with a specific type of advertising called *brand* advertising. If you remember, brand advertising creates a personality for a brand or company for the purposes of charging its consumers premium prices. Most advertising that you see is *not* brand advertising. The classified ads and promotional and price advertising for supermarkets, electronic superstores, etc. are all examples of advertising that are *not* brand advertising. I'm mentioning this now because this distinction holds true for advertising on the Internet just as it does for advertising in traditional media. All advertising is not created equal. Brand advertising is different—more sophisticated and more manipulative.

Now that we're moving from traditional media to new media, you might automatically think that the principles of great brand advertising will change dramatically. It's true that every medium that advertising uses to deliver its message to targeted consumers has its own "peculiarities." The peculiarities of each medium affect the advertising message itself. Take radio for an example. We've learned that radio needs to create visuals in our mind's eye, but we also know that radio has no actual visuals. That fact has a dramatic effect on the content of the advertising message. In other words, our ad is going to be quite different on radio than it would be on TV, in a magazine, on a billboard, and, yes, on the internet. So the medium in many ways dictates how the advertising message is going to communicate.

So how does the Internet as a medium affect its advertising message? Surprisingly, the answer is—very little. In fact, brand advertising on the Internet is really more of an *adaption* of one or more of the traditional media, rather than something new and revolutionary. *Everything* you have already learned in this book about writing for *traditional media* applies to the Internet. Yes, you have to be aware of certain peculiarities, but the *principles* you have already learned are the *same*. Having said that, let's focus on these peculiarities in some of the major arenas online. New sites, especially in social media, pop up every week, so I've chosen only the major ones—Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter—to use as examples. There are always going to be hot, new sites, and we can't address them all, but these will give you a good idea of how to use the Internet in brand advertising.

THE GOOGLE MODEL

Google accounts for nearly 70 percent of all searches on the Internet. All of those eyeballs have proven to be a gold mine for Google via its advertising model, called AdWords. You have noticed, of course, that when you search on Google that advertising appears on the right side of the page and now also above the list of what you searched for. These are ads in the Google model. Advertisers only pay Google for these ads when someone clicks on them, which advertisers love, of course. These Google-style ads, however, fall far short of brand advertising. They are too stark, too short,

and too dull to create and sustain brand personalities. They are a bit like the classified ads we see in newspapers—effective at finding things we might want to buy, but incapable of creating brand personalities. There is a part of the Google ad model, however, that can be useful in creating brand personalities. After you click on one of the Google ads, you're hyperlinked to a "landing page" or simply the company or brand's website. Usually, the landing page is focused on delivering further information about what it is you clicked on. The company or brand's website, on the other hand, is going to be much broader and more comprehensive, but not as specific about giving you the information you really want, as the landing page does. Because this book is solely focused on brand advertising, how effective is the Google model in brand advertising? The Google model depends on a one-two punch. You see the ad on the right or above your search, then you click on the ad, and you're hyperlinked to either a landing page or the company/brand's website. What you see on the landing page could be commercial, but probably much longer—more like the infomercials we see on TV. So, while the Google ads as they appear on your search page are *not* brand advertising, what they *connect* you to upon clicking on them could be. That is especially true of a dedicated landing page that specifically addresses what you wanted more information about in the first place. Once you reach the landing page, however, what you'll find there is just an *adaption* of brand advertising from traditional media. It could be a variation of a print ad, but mostly likely it's an adaption of a TV commercial. It might be longer or shorter, but it's still a TV commercial, only it's *not* on TV. But the *principles* of copywriting are the *same* as you learned in the TV chapter. You'll see that this fact holds true regardless of where the brand advertising appears online.

THE FACEBOOK MODEL

The Facebook advertising model is very similar to the Google model. When you go to a Facebook page, ads appear on the right side. Facebook allows 25 characters for the headline and 190 for the body copy and one image. What does that remind you of? It's a very short print ad. So, all of the principles you have learned in this book about writing print ads apply to writing Facebook ads. The print ad has just moved from inside of a magazine or newspaper onto Facebook, Twitter, etc. And the parallels don't end there. When you click on Facebook ads, they take you to an internal Facebook landing page or to the company/brand's website. What does that remind you of? QR codes in print ads do exactly the same thing.

Now, what about the landing page? Facebook likes you stay on its site, so it strongly encourages you to use an internal landing page when consumers click on your ad. Just as in the Google model, the landing page in Facebook is a great opportunity for brand advertising as we have defined it—advertising for the purpose of creating a brand personality that enables premium pricing. Just as I described in the Google section, this landing page can consist of anything from a longer print ad to a short commercial to a much longer commercial that's like an infomercial to a very artistic miniature film that builds pure brand personality. Whatever is on this landing page, the strategic and creative principles that you leaned in this book apply.

THE YOUTUBE MODEL

YouTube presents a lot more opportunities for brand advertising than Google or Facebook. It's much more akin to a TV experience. There are two ways to build brand personalities on YouTube.

The first way is with traditional TV commercials. The only difference is *when* they are shown. On TV, the commercials are *interspersed* among the content, whereas on YouTube they run *before* the content. It's called a **pre-roll**, and YouTube's official name for it is TrueView. As I said, this almost exactly mirrors how commercials are used already on TV. So all of the principles you have learned in this book about writing TV commercials apply to those on YouTube. In other words, they're *still* TV commercials; they're just not on TV anymore. In fact, YouTube has been very open about stating that it wants to be your TV—only online. Instead of just posting other people's videos, it now has channels with exclusive content. Furthermore, I think everyone agrees that eventually *everything* will be on the Internet—just as radio already is, via Pandora and Spotify. Soon we won't distinguish between watching content on TV versus watching it on our computers—they will be one in the same. All that will matter is the *content* itself. The *device* that delivers it—as long as it doesn't affect the content—is irrelevant. In fact, there is an old adage in Hollywood that's worth mentioning here—"content is king."

The second way to do brand advertising on YouTube is to make your commercial the actual content, rather than running a commercial before someone *else's* content. If we can create YouTube videos that our consumers actually *seek out* and watch because they *want* to, then we might not even need to advertise at all. One of my students brought YouTube videos to class that accomplished exactly that. They featured the Blendtec Total Blender and its inventor, who claimed it could blend anything. Each YouTube "Will It Blend?" video demonstrated how this blender could handle anything. He put in outrageous stuff like an iPhone, glow sticks—anything you could think of. The word quickly got around, and consumers were watching the videos in the millions! *But*, they're just commercials, right? Yes, but their outrageousness and fun *elevates* them to *entertainment*. And so, as they say, they "went viral."

Many brands are trying to do the same thing. Will Ferrell did YouTube videos for Meister Brau beer, and I'm sure you know of hundreds of other examples. For a brand that has a small ad budget—or none at all—doing YouTube videos is an inexpensive and potentially explosive way to connect with your brand's consumers. But doing so is tougher than it looks. Consumers don't like being tricked or feeling as if they are being played. The videos have to *organically* spring from your brand and its targeted consumers, seamlessly entertaining as they do so. It's a very tall order. Brand advertising that our consumers seek out, rather it seeking them out is rare. And that rarity is the reason YouTube videos are usually backed up with pre-roll commercials that are sure to be seen by our target market.

These two approaches to YouTube coincidently reflect one of the most basic advertising principles. Are consumers looking for us or are we looking for them? The first way we used YouTube our brand is looking for its consumers, whereas in the second model our consumers are looking for our brand.

THE TWITTER MODEL

Twitter is built for speed. It's microblogging at its most micro level. As I'm sure you know, tweets must be 140 characters or fewer. You pick tweets to follow, and those automatically appear on your Twitter time line, which is a lot like your Facebook wall. Some of those you follow on Twitter are not people, but *brands* and *companies*. You choose them; they don't choose you. Twitter is great at social media, but poor at generating revenue from it. To help remedy this, Twitter has "promoted tweets," which are labeled as such and paid for by advertisers who want to make sure they reach their targeted consumers on Twitter. These appear on your Twitter time line and often are promotions. When you click on these offers, you're taken to an external website that completes the communication or allows you to print out the coupons you need and so forth. As a rule, promoted tweets that aren't organically shared by others are discontinued. Now, after that brief overview, the big question is this: is Twitter a vehicle for brand advertising? If you take the initial tweet, which is often promotional in nature, the answer is no. *But*, just as in Facebook, there is an opportunity to build and reinforce a brand's personality once you are hyperlinked to the landing page or website. If they are promotional offers, however, they are a poor way to create and reinforce brand personalities. In fact, because they are most often price discounts, they don't add value to the brand, but actually tarnish and cheapen it by lowering its price. So I would say that Twitter in its current configuration is not a good vehicle for creating and reinforcing brand personalities.

BEYOND GOOGLE, YOUTUBE, AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Let's take banners first. A static banner ad (one without movement), whether horizontal or vertical, is primarily a billboard. So whether it is on the interstate or the Internet, the same advertising billboard principles apply—the message should be visually compelling and the copy (if any) should be very short. Static banner ads are the billboards of the Internet.

Some banner ads, though, are not static, but have actual movement. As a creative, this gives you even more to work with than a static banner. Now you have the single best way to grab a person's attention—moving pictures! The same billboard principles of a static banner ad apply—compelling visual and short copy—but now they *move*. A third kind of banner ad is one that not only moves but also plays a short commercial when we click on it. Sometimes this message is played right in the banner ad and other times we are hyperlinked to the advertiser's website or a landing page and the message plays there. Either way, what is that except a commercial? Yes, the Internet changes the presentation, but it's still a commercial. It just happens to be on your Internet screen instead of your TV screen.

Pre-rolls are not unique to YouTube. In fact, they are used throughout the Internet, and their frequency is exploding. Here's an example that I'm sure has happened to you. I went to the Weather Channel and requested a forecast for a city I planned to visit. Before I got what I wanted, I had to pay a price. Namely, I had to watch a commercial that—no matter how

furiously I clicked and clicked—would not go away. Then, as suddenly as it appeared, it was gone and the forecast I requested appeared. Does this remind you of anything? Of course, it does—the good 'ole TV commercial, slightly adapted for the new medium of the Internet. Instead of the commercials being interspersed *between* the content, now they come *before* the content. But it's still a TV commercial, morphing and adapting itself to the dictates of a new medium. The point is that the greatest branding tool of all time—the TV commercial—is alive and well on the Internet.

What's also alive and well are all the principles you have already learned about doing great commercials. They all apply to commercials done for the Internet just as they do for those done for TV. In fact, the commercials you see online are often identical to the ones you see on TV. Furthermore, commercials on the Internet are even *more* effective for advertisers and their agencies. The first reason is because we can't fast-forward through them as we can on TV after recording the programs with our DVRs. Secondly, targeting the consumers who are going to see the commercial online is far more precise than on TV.

So, just when you thought the Internet was free, you realize there is no free lunch. Advertising in all its forms—print, billboard, radio, and TV—have found a new home on your computer screen. Why? The reason comes down to money, as it so often does. Consumers have rejected paying for content on the Internet with money, so they must pay with their eyeballs. Better yet, via cookies and other tracking devices, the Internet can pinpoint these commercials to the targeted consumers much more precisely than they can in traditional media.

THE MOBILE "WILD CARD"

Having explored how brand advertising works on the Internet, we must make note of a unique threat to its effectiveness—the smartphone. The smartphone has become the one indispensable device that consumers carry with them. They might also carry a laptop or a tablet, or even both, but of the three only the smartphone is indispensable. Before smartphones, we could only talk and text. Now, with smartphones, we can check e-mails, surf the Internet, and interact on social media sites. The problem with this for advertisers is that smartphones' screens are tiny compared to tablets, laptops, and desktops. These small screens often compromise the brand message and make it all but ineffective. The Google, Facebook, and YouTube advertising models, as well as banner ads across the Internet, are all affected by this sea change to smartphones and tablets. They're all but unworkable on small smartphone screens. Facebook in particular is grappling with this issue. Mobile computing is quickly replacing at-home computing, and that's especially true of social media. Facebook has begun to find effective ways for advertisers to reach their consumers where they live—on their smartphones. And what's vital to advertisers is vital to Facebook—and any other social media that needs revenue from advertising to survive and prosper. In other words, the eyeballs have moved. Increasingly they are fixated on smartphones and tablets, not laptops or desktops. Any number of apps are designed to overcome the physical shortcomings of small smartphone screens. Twitter's Vine app, which enables users to create and post six-second videos right in their Twitter feeds, is specifically geared to mobile

smartphone usage. Facebook has responded via its wholly owned Instagram with 15-second videos that users post along with their photographs. Both Twitter and Instagram are already exploring how to turn these short-video apps into advertising revenue. Eventually—along with short videos from family, friends, and strangers—it's not hard to image how advertisers could join the conversation with 6- and 15-second videos about their companies and brands. The 30-second commercial is morphing into increasingly shorter and shorter online formats. The traditional 20-second pre-roll commercial on YouTube is beginning to look epic. But the big question is: how short can you go and still have an effective brand message? So far, the pre-roll is the most viable way to adapt brand advertising to smartphones. That's probably why we are seeing so many pre-roll commercials before getting the content we requested. Vine is the hot app of the moment, and no doubt Instagram's 15-second version will be equally popular. But hot apps of the past have disappeared as quickly as they appeared. Will these new apps from Twitter and Instagram meet similar fates? Either way, mobile computing is driving brand messages to smaller screens and shorter length. And at some point I believe that trend will adversely compromise the effectiveness of the commercials.

Of course, there are advantages to smartphones that advertisers can exploit. Their very mobility means that they can always be in touch with their targeted consumers because their targeted consumers always have their smartphones. That's especially true of young people and, of course, they are the future. Smartphones can also read QR codes, and that's been a boon for advertisers. It enables them to combine traditional marketing communications with the power of the Internet. Via the QR code, smartphones can transport consumers to any number of brand experiences. My bet is that advertisers—and the Internet media that profit from them—will find ways to make mobile computing work in brand advertising. I'm confident because they have no choice. As you learned earlier, companies have to keep their brands on the minds and in the hearts of their consumers. If they don't, they die.

Now, in conclusion, here is the moral of this entire section about the Internet as a medium. Although the Internet is a fabulously new and inventive medium, the way it uses brand advertising is surprisingly similar to the way it's used in traditional media. So, as a creative, you can be confident that the principles you've already learned apply to the Internet as much as they do to traditional media.

THE INTERNET AS AN INTERACTIVE MARKETING-COMMUNICATIONS TOOL

Of the eight marketing-communications subsets, this book is concerned only with advertising. But I do briefly want to address one other marketing-communications subset—interactive. The Internet can operate as a medium for advertising, but it also has another role—as a separate, stand-alone marketing-communications tool that I've called interactive. As opposed to traditional media, which are totally passive and allow no interaction with their audiences, the Internet not only enables interaction, but encourages and facilities it. This is most notable on the social media sites I've discussed above. These sites are designed to encourage interaction. And that interaction

can be with *brands* and *companies*, just as well as with people. When we use the Internet like this, however, as a social lubricant, the rules change.

When we are an advertiser on the Internet, including social media sites, we have *paid* for that exposure, and certain assurances derive from that payment. When we use the Internet as an interactive marketing-communications tool, however, we are *not* paying, so our brand or company is just another "person" that wants to "join the conversation." When the Internet wears this separate, marketing-communications hat, it functions a lot like public relations, only online. The control we had as an *advertiser*, we no longer enjoy as a *participant* because we haven't paid for it. So we have to make our brand or company *relevant* if we want to be included in the conversation. So on Facebook, for example, brands and companies have their own Facebook page or wall and can be "liked" just as real people are "liked." They have their own Twitter time lines and can be followed on Twitter by their consumers. They create YouTube videos—like the Will Ferrell Meister Brau campaign I mentioned earlier—that they hope will be watched by their targeted consumers as entertainment and go viral. The same is true of Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, and any number of other sites—brands and corporations use them to stay engaged with their consumers.

But why is it so vital to engage with our consumers on these social media sites? Because consumers are a fickle lot, and if they don't interact with the brands they love they quickly forget about them. They fall in love with another brand or, worse yet, decide to love a private-label brand that costs much less. This is a disaster for companies because it goes right back to what we first learned—companies are nothing without their brands. Companies know that survival of their brands is dependent upon keeping them in front of their targeted consumers. Now, here's the point of that long preface. Because the Internet is interactive, not passive, consumers can communicate *with each other without brands* or *companies* being part of the conversation. That's a disaster for corporations and their brands. Companies cannot abide that. They *must* be part of the conversation because the survival of their brands and, therefore, their business models, depend on it.

So, advertisers follow the eyeballs. When those eyeballs move, advertisers must find a way to move with them. That's why they have moved onto Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, etc.—because that's where the eyeballs are. The problem for advertisers, as you just learned, is that social media sites don't lend themselves well to the passive absorption of brand advertising. And, the more it intrudes on these sites, the more consumers resent it. So in order to stay in front of their consumers, brands must *interact* on these sites as well as *advertise* on them. That's the mission of the interactive tool in marketing communications. In this interactive role, a brand or corporation is just another *participant*. They are not controlling the conversation as they are in advertising, but rather *begging* to be a part of it! They need to give their targeted consumers reasons to "like" them on Facebook, look at their videos on YouTube, and talk about them on Twitter. Often these reasons have to do with giving consumers price discounts, deals, prizes, and so forth. Before the Internet, *they* controlled the conversation via advertising in traditional media. On the Internet their *consumers* control the conversation—and corporations and their brands must find a way to join in. They have no choice because that's where the eyeballs are moving to—especially the young, most desirable eyeballs—and they must stay in front of those eyeballs or die.

Chapter Ten

How to Do Campaigns

An advertising **campaign** is a collection of ads and commercials that have a noticeable similarity in their visuals, copy, layouts, themes, consumer benefits, and objective. They exist as a *series* with the idea that all of them *together* will communicate the consumer benefit in a more forceful, memorable, and varied way than any one of them can *individually*. In other words, the theory behind doing campaigns instead of individual executions is that "the whole is great than the sum of its parts."

Going from doing individual executions to doing entire campaigns is a steep learning curve for beginning copywriters. But it's necessary you demonstrate this skill in your portfolio (your book). The creative directors you'll be interviewing with will want to see that you can think of big ideas that can extend for years—that is, campaigns. In fact, "extendability" is an excellent way to judge whether you've got a big idea. If *dozens* of executions *leap* to mind, you're on to something big. On the other hand, if you've thought of two executions in the campaign and can't think of a third, fourth, or fifth, then start over. This often happens to my students. Ninety percent of the campaigns I see have one *great* execution, but the second and third are weak.

All of the creative briefs that you'll find in Chapter 14 require campaigns, rather than individual executions. Once you've done the limbering-up exercises throughout this book, it's best to jump directly into campaigns and begin learning how to do these big ideas. As I've said many times in this book, the only way to learn the skill of copywriting is to do it and do it and do it. That's what the creative briefs are designed to do—give you practice and, ultimately, a framework from which you can build your book. Without a book you can't interview and get the job you want.

Historically, brand advertising has been done in campaigns. That was part of the advertising bible. We were all searching for the big idea that had the scope and breadth necessary to create campaigns that would run for years and years. Leo Burnett was famous for this. Often their campaigns would be built around a central, iconic figure like Tony the Tiger, the Marlboro Man, Charlie the Tuna, the Maytag Repair Man, etc. This is a clear and effective way to extend

Figure 10.1

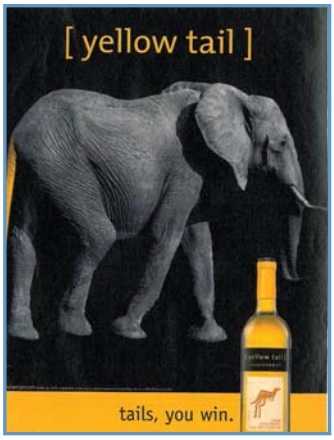


Figure 10.2

Figure 10.3

Figure 10.4

Figure 10.8

Figure 10.9

the campaign by using the campaign's trademark icon, while still varying the actual commercials so they stay fresh for the targeted consumers. Without an iconic character, the campaign is often held together by a copy theme or slogan that finishes every ad and every commercial. In addition, there is a uniform layout among the print ads in the campaign and the look of the TV commercials. I've included a few examples of print campaigns here that will give you a good idea of what I'm talking about. And that's one of the real challenges in doing advertising campaigns versus individual ads or commercials. The executions in a campaign have to be similar enough to be easily identified as part of the series, but unique and fresh enough to bring the targeted consumers back to the campaign over and over again. Each new ad in the campaign refreshes the campaign, yet also reinforces the uniformity of the campaign. So the executions in any campaign must strike a delicate balance between uniqueness and uniformity. Let's examine this principle in the Yellowtail, Crystal Light and Principal Financial campaigns.

In the Yellowtail campaign, the layouts are the same, there is always an animal and the tail is always yellow—uniformity (Figures 10.1–10.2). But the animal and the type of wine is different from ad to ad—uniqueness. With Crystal Light, the visual "motif" is the same, the pitchers are the same, the flow of the liquid is the same and the layout is the same—uniformity (Figure 10.3–10.4). What changes is the color and the flavor of Crystal Light that the color represents—uniqueness. Lastly, in Principal Financial, the little cartoon man is the same, the layout is the same and the little cartoon man is always using the Principal Financial logo is some helpful way—uniformity. But the way the logo is helping him differs from ad to ad—uniqueness (Figure 10.8).

CAMPAIGNS IN ONE MEDIUM VERSUS SEVERAL MEDIA

A multimedia campaign is one that includes executions in more than one medium. So, let's say we have executions in print and television or out-of-home and television or radio, Internet, and television, or maybe the multimedia campaign includes *all* available media—print, out-of-home, radio, television, and Internet. Multimedia campaigns are the most difficult to master, so we'll start with campaigns that utilize only one medium and then build up to multimedia campaigns. This approach works well in my classes and I think it will here, as well.

PRINT CAMPAIGNS

In my classes, I always start with the medium of print, specifically magazines rather than newspapers, but the principles discussed here apply equally to both. I like to start with print because print stays put. Radio and TV commercials come and go in literally seconds, so they are very difficult to study. We have to keep playing them over and over again. Not so with print. Print stays put, so we can thoroughly examine it, analyze it, and learn from those campaigns already out there.

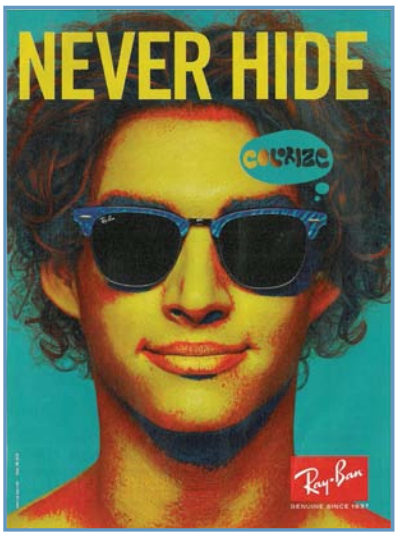


Figure 10.10

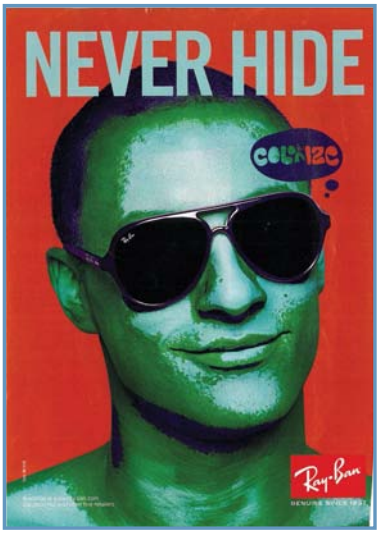


Figure 10.11

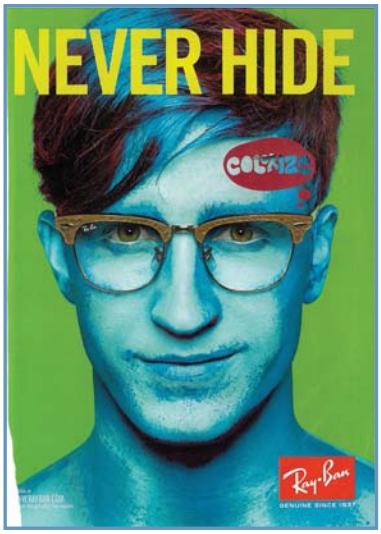


Figure 10.12

Doing campaigns versus doing individual ads is a real challenge for students of copywriting. As with everything else in this book, it can only be mastered with practice, practice, practice. One of the limbering-up exercises I use in my class is to ask the students to come up with the *next* ad in a campaign that's already out there. Look at the Ray-Ban campaign I have here (Figures 10.10–10.13).

Once we have shown three men with different Ray-Ban sunglasses, what would be the fourth ad in this campaign? Most of the students correctly guess, as you probably did, an ad with a woman. After using a man in the first three ads of the campaign, it would make logical sense to now use a woman in the fourth ad. By doing so, you see, we are *adding* information about our brand and *also* broadening and strengthening the consumer benefit; that is, "Ray-Ban sunglasses are not only for men, but women, too." Now, having brought a woman into the campaign in ad four, what's ad *five*? Well, think to yourself: what can you introduce in ad five that's new, but still keeps it part of the series? One answer—and what they did in the actual campaign—was using an illustration of a woman instead of a photograph. Notice how minor of a change this is. And that's why doing a campaign rather than just one ad is such a challenge. Each ad needs to add to and refresh the campaign, *but* it also needs to it reinforce the campaign's uniformity.

When I was in the business, sometimes we would do a pool of ads or commercials that represented a campaign all at once. Then those ads would either run in a particular order or all at the same time, or a combination of the two. Usually a campaign needs at least three executions to be considered a campaign. Sometimes, that means three print ads, but only one TV commercial. That was the case when I did the Van Camp's pork 'n beans campaign. Because TV is so much more expensive than print, the media department determined that the media plan was not large enough to warrant two or three commercials. So they in effect were deciding that targeted consumers would not see the one commercial often enough to become bored with it. How they come to this decision on frequency is a hotly debated mix of art and science that's beyond the scope of this book. The

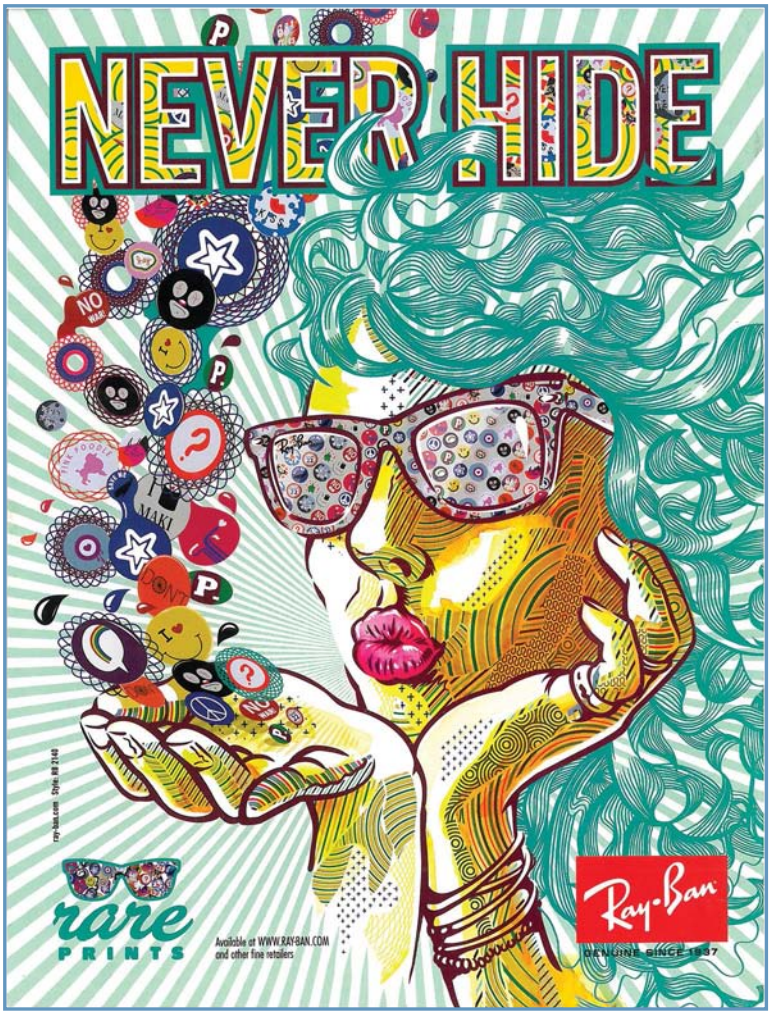


Figure 10.13

important thing from our point of view is that the TV commercial must have similarity with the print ad and register with the consumer as part of the same campaign. That is called a **multimedia campaign**, because we have executions that extend over several media and maybe *all* of them. So, in other words, we might have three print ads, three billboard ads, three radio commercials, and three TV commercials. Then these traditional ads might all wind up on the Internet in the form of banner ads, pre-roll commercials, etc.

Let's go back to a strictly print campaign and see what tips I can offer you when working on a campaign versus an individual print ad. Let's see what we can learn from the Ray-Ban campaign. I think the first three ads were done at the same time. Let's examine what's different about them. The layouts are the same. The headlines are the same. The bright colors are the same. But what's not the same are the *men* in them. So this is the first component that changes from ad to ad and makes it a campaign. The second component that changes from ad to ad is the type of Ray-Ban sunglasses they are wearing.

If you examine the three men, each is meant to be a prototype for a particular personality that then is captured by a particular pair of Ray-Ban sunglasses. This highlights the consumer benefit of Ray-Bans, which I'm guessing is this: regardless of your personality, Ray-Ban has a pair of sunglasses that "let's you be you." So by varying the men in the ads *and* the sunglasses they are wearing, we now have a *campaign* that proposes a powerfully compelling benefit to consumers. After all, the reasons we wear sunglasses go far beyond shading our eyes. We use them to look cool, mysterious, in-fashion, and so forth. The sunglasses become a way for us to project our personalities. *All* of that complicated psychological "stuff" is communicated in this campaign. That's what great advertising can do.

Now, let's go back a few steps and say you come into the agency and your first assignment as a copywriter is to come up with ad *four* in this Ray-Ban campaign. This is very realistic. Often new copywriters are assigned preexisting campaigns that need freshening up. The more experienced copywriters, who originally came up with the campaign, have moved on to other "big ideas." Because the first three ads all have men, as we said, the natural choice for the fourth ad is to depict a woman. As you learned earlier, our mission is to change the campaign just enough to freshen it up in consumers' minds, but not *so* much that the new ad looks out of place as part of what is obviously a series or collection.

In general, as they have done with Ray-Ban, one of the easiest ways to execute a campaign idea is to change the visuals while leaving everything else in the ads the same. This is exactly what I did in my Van Camp's pork 'n beans and Stokely fruits and vegetables campaigns that I previously highlighted. In both campaigns, the headlines remain the same, the body copy remains the same, and the layouts remain the same. The only element that changes is the visuals.

Changing the visuals in a series of print ads is the most common way to execute a print campaign. So when you're building your portfolio (your book), this is a great way to go. But there may be a very good reason to do the reverse and change the headlines, leaving the visuals the same. This is seldom the better choice, however, and this why. As you have already learned, the single most important element in any ad is the visual. It's the visual that grabs the target, communicates instantly, and pulls the consumer in. Then, and only then, do they go to the headline for explanation, illumination, illustration, etc. For this reason alone, it makes the most sense to vary the visuals in a campaign rather than the headlines.

Notice in the Ray Ban examples that we have discussed campaigns in which *either* the visuals *or* the headlines change. But there might be good reason to change *both* from ad to ad. That's what I did with the Gatorade campaign that you see here (Figures 10.14–10.16). The reason the three ads still have a campaign look is because of three unifying elements: the layouts remain identical, even though the people pictured don't; the bolt hits the Gatorade bottle in all three ads; and the campaign theme line or slogan is in all three ads at the bottom right. This was the first campaign that ever positioned Gatorade as a "sports drink." We did all three of these ads at the same time and wanted to depict three different types of athletes and sports, but only one benefit—when you're up against it, Gatorade gives you the energy you need to succeed. So the moral of this paragraph is that there are several ways to maintain uniformity in a print campaign.

CATCH SOME
OF OUR LIGHTNING.
One on one, in the burning sun. You and a cornerback, step for step. A lot of heat. Sweat. Thirst. But the job has got to get done. That's when Gatorade® could make a difference. Developed under playing conditions at a major Southern university, Gatorade® thirst quencher is specifically designed to help replace salts and fluids you sweat away. To help restore your body's fluid and electrolyte balance. Before you get that burned-out feeling. After all, your moves could make
Gatorade
WHEN YOU'RE THIRSTY
TO WIN.

Figure 10.14

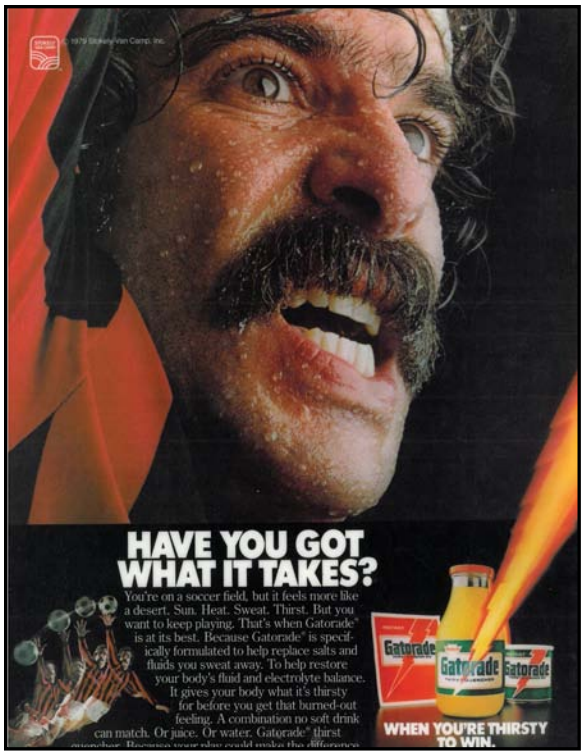

HAVE YOU GOT
WHAT IT TAKES?
You're on a soccer field, but it feels more like a desert. Sun. Heat. Sweat. Thirst. But you want to keep playing. That's when Gatorade® is at its best. Because Gatorade® is specifically formulated to help replace salts and fluids you sweat away. To help restore your body's fluid and electrolyte balance. It gives your body what it's thirsty for before you get that burned-out feeling. A combination no soft drink can match. Or juice. Or water. Gatorade® thirst
Gatorade
WHEN YOU'RE THIRSTY
TO WIN.

Figure 10.15

IT COULD
MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
It's *hot*. And you're wringing wet and dripping sweat with every swing. The thirst in your mouth has spread through your body. But you want to keep playing. Gatorade® could make a difference. Gatorade® thirst quencher is specifically designed to do things ordinary soft drinks and juices just don't do — to help replace salts and fluids you sweat away, and help restore your body's fluid and electrolyte balance. Before you get that burned-out feeling. Before you
Gatorade
WHEN YOU'RE THIRSTY
TO WIN.

Figure 10.16

So, those are useful tips to get you started thinking in campaigns instead of individual ads. To recap, *something* must change in the ads that comprise a campaign. Most often that element is the visual because the visual carries so much weight as a communications tool. But, if the situation warrants it, we could do the reverse and leave the visuals the same from ad to ad, but change the headlines. Lastly, we saw in the Gatorade campaign that we can change the headlines *and* the visuals and still maintain the uniformity a campaign demands.

OUT-OF-HOME CAMPAIGNS

Before we move on to radio and TV, we can quickly address out-of-home. Simply put, all of the principles I have just given you for print campaigns apply to out-of-home campaigns. The primary difference is that out-of-home campaigns have no body copy. But otherwise, create out-of-home campaigns as you would print campaigns. Most likely, you'll change visuals from billboard to billboard and leave the headline (if you need one) the same. Or you'll change the headlines and leave the visual the same. Or, as in the Gatorade example, you change *both*, but leave other elements the same to maintain uniformity.

INTERNET BANNER-AD CAMPAIGNS

As I wrote in the chapter on Internet advertising, advertising online looks surprisingly like advertising in traditional media. There are minor nuances, and in this case one of them is that our banner-ad campaign online could be *static* or elements within the banner could *move*. If the consumer has to click on them to get the movement, then that really is just a TV commercial that has morphed and adapted to life on the Internet. However, if the banner ads move on their own, then this is just a minor variation of static banners ads and, therefore, their traditional-media cousin—out-of-home. So in respect to banner ads that aren't TV commercials in disguise, think of them as billboards on the virtual highway, rather than the actual highway. As a result, executing an out-of-home campaign in virtual reality is no different than executing one in actual reality—all of the same principles of campaigns apply.

RADIO CAMPAIGNS

As you've already learned, every medium has its "peculiarities." Obviously, in radio (audio-only commercials online, broadcast, or satellite) this includes the lack of visuals. But we also learned that great radio—like all great advertising—*must* be visual. It's just that in radio the visuals exist in our mind's eye, not our actual eyes. This is called "the theater of the mind," in which the tools that we have to work with in radio—sound effects, voices, music, and jingles—conjure a rich

visual mosaic in our minds. Radio that does *not* do this is radio that just talks *at* us and not *with* us, and radio that consumers ignore and outright avoid.

In creating a campaign in strictly the medium of radio, we have to go back and look at what we have to work with in our "toolkit." As listed in the radio chapter, this includes human sounds, but not actual words; sound effects; dialogue; instrumental music; and music with lyrics called jingles. Before you begin doing radio *campaigns*, you should remind yourself how to do *one* great radio spot, as I outlined in the radio section and the limbering-up exercises. Practice doing individual radio commercials first, so you are well versed in using the tools I just listed. Then you can move on to radio campaigns.

As with print campaigns, a radio campaign consists of commercials that form a collection or series and have obvious uniformity among them. Recall that a campaign is a delicate balance between uniqueness and uniformity. In a print campaign of three ads, we can change the headlines in all, but leave the visuals in all the same. Or we can do the reverse. Or we can change *both*, as long as we have other elements in all three ads that remain uniform, for example, the theme or slogan, a visual device, or the design and layout of all the ads. Now, how can we accomplish the same thing in radio?

Well, first let's consider what we could keep *uniform* from one individual radio commercial to the next. First, we could keep the announcer's voice (if there is an announcer) the same in all of the commercials, and maybe even character voices (if there are any). Secondly, we could use the same instrumental music throughout the campaign. Lastly, and most powerfully, we could hold a radio campaign together by using the same jingle throughout. If you've written a good jingle, its lyrics sing the consumer benefit or brand promise. So, in effect, the jingle allows us to repeat over and over again the brand's benefit to the consumer in a very pleasant way—with a song. That's the beauty of a jingle; it allows us a high rate of repetition with a low rate of wear out. So, those are the three most obvious ways to bring uniformity to a radio campaign. Another might be the same sound effects. For example, maybe every commercial in the campaign starts with the same ring tone or maybe every spot has the sound of a car engine revving. The opportunities here are endless. And still another way would be to end each of the radio commercials with the same theme line or slogan (as we did in print). Any one of these five devices will hold your radio campaign together and give it a sense of a collection or series, and using several of these will only increase that sense of uniformity. There is also a certain "wholeness" that arises organically from the idea itself.

So, now that we've concentrated on all the things that *don't* change, what *does* change? Well, one change could be to whom the commercial is targeting demographically. Just as in the Ray-Ban campaign, in which the first three ads depicted men, we could have one spot with a man, one with a woman, and the third with both. The overall consumer benefit of the brand is the same to all of them but this gives us an opportunity to refine and refresh the message. Other examples of changes could be using adults versus kids, focusing on different geographic parts of the country, different races, or even a different language (e.g., Spanish for the Latino market). Another change that could be used from one commercial to the next is *how* or *when* the brand

is used. For example, Kraft Macaroni & Cheese could be used as an after-school snack, a side dish for lunch, or an entire family dinner. The situations in which the Kraft Macaroni & Cheese is being used are different from commercial to commercial, but other elements could remain the same—the jingle, the announcer's voice, the characters, and the theme line or slogan at the end. Finally, one last example of what could change from one commercial to the next in a radio campaign could be the *subbrands* in each commercial. For example, let's take CoverGirl. Our overall radio campaign could be for CoverGirl cosmetics, but each commercial *within* that campaign could be for a very different type of CoverGirl cosmetic—lipstick, blush, foundation, fragrance, etc.

In summary, a radio campaign, just like any campaign, is a balance between uniformity and uniqueness. If each spot within the campaign is *too uniform*, there's not enough that's different to capture the target market's ongoing attention. However, if each spot is *too unique*, then the targeted consumer loses the sense that all of these spots are part of a series or collection and have a common objective.

TV CAMPAIGNS

In this rapidly changing media environment, a TV commercial might *never* play on TV. But, as we learned, it's still a commercial. All of the principles we have learned for doing great TV commercials apply to commercials that play on other platforms. Those platforms could include all or some of the following: the brand or company's *own* website, *other* brand or company websites, Facebook (either on the brand's own Facebook page or as a paid spot on some other part of the Facebook site), Twitter, YouTube, and any number of others. Not even the tech experts in Silicon Valley know what the next big thing will be, so I certainly don't. For our purposes, what we *do* know is that the principles of a great TV commercial apply on any present or future communication platform. The commercials might vary in their length depending on what's appropriate for the platform. For example, a pre-roll commercial that appears before we get the information we requested online will be shorter than one that appears on the brand or company's own website, where the viewer—by his or her very visit—has exhibited an interest in the company or brand. So a brand's traditional 30-second broadcast or cable TV commercial might morph into a 15-second spot when viewed as a pre-roll on YouTube and morph again into a five-minute commercial on the brand's own website and morph still again if it's a YouTube video hoping to go viral.

Web-based TVs are already out there, of course. And as their prices come down, our two primary forms of entertainment and information—the TV and the Internet—will merge into one. One minute we'll be watching our favorite show on a broadcast station and the next we'll switch over to YouTube, Facebook, or Twitter. Or we might be accessing all three at the same time on the same screen. There will be devices for our homes (WebTV) and other devices (smartphones and tablets) for outside of the home. Commercials will find a way to play on all of them because, as you have already learned, companies need to keep their brands on the minds and in the hearts

of consumers. Otherwise, brands will die and that, in turn, means the corporations behind the brands will die. And, of course, that's unacceptable. So if you want to write TV commercials, the good news is that they will be around for a long, long time. The greatest branding device ever conceived will be tough to replace. Yes, it will morph and adapt, but it will survive, and the principles we've already learned that make those commercials great will also survive. Now, after that long, but necessary, preamble, let's learn how to do a *campaign* of commercials.

Many of the principles of a campaign that we learned for the other media apply equally to TV. It's always a balance between uniformity and uniqueness. Here are some of the ways to give a TV campaign uniformity: we can use the same visual style or elements, the same end line at the end of the commercial (what we were calling the "killer line"), the same campaign theme-line/slogan (different from the killer line), the same voice-over announcer, the same jingle (if there is one), the same instrumental music, the same on-camera talent (humans, lizards, dogs, etc.) … well, you get the point. There are plenty of ways to bring uniformity to different commercials within a TV campaign. Now, what about uniqueness? Every commercial in the campaign must be unique enough to reinvolve its targeted consumers. As with the other media, there are several ways to impart uniqueness to each commercial. One way is to depict different parts of the target market in different commercials, so, if we have a campaign of three commercials, one would be directed to men, another to women, and the third to children. If it's strictly a woman's brand, we can depict women of different ages, races, and ethnicities. We could spotlight different subbrands within the brand, for example Clorox bleach for clothes and Clorox bath cleaner for bathrooms. Other ways to impart uniqueness could be in the "when, where, and how" of a brand's usage, as we delineated in the radio section with the example of Kraft Macaroni & Cheese (reread if you need to). Other changes among the commercials in a campaign could concern geography, race, or language (think of the Spanish-language version of an English-language campaign). Finally, you could alter the seasons. For example, one commercial in the campaign could highlight Christmas, another Easter, still another Valentine's Day. If a campaign was for Scott's lawn care products, one commercial could be for spring and another for fall and still another for winter's "dormant" season. All of these devices will help you strike the delicate balance between uniformity and uniqueness that any campaign—in any medium—demands. As with everything I set out in this book, it takes practice, practice, practice. And that's what the creative briefs in Chapter 14 are designed to do. All require you to think and create in terms of campaigns. Sometimes the campaign uses just one medium and other times it's played out in several media. That's what we'll discuss next.

MULTIMEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Usually the creatives have little input as to which media are used in a campaign. It's usually decided by the media planners, often in conjunction with the account manager, client, and even the account planner, who often sets the brand's strategy. I've taken quite a bit of space describing how to create campaigns that use only one medium. This was a good place to start

because it's less complicated to work in one medium and increasingly more complicated as you add media to what media planners call the **media mix**. More often than not, however, campaigns use several media. That fact is often driven by budgets. You've heard or read about commercials that cost $500,000 or even $1 million. That's true. You hire a name director and use CGI and it doesn't take long for a 30-second commercial to reach those levels. *But*, however expensive a commercial may be to produce, it pales in comparison to how expensive the media is going to cost to run it. Just think of the millions of dollars a Super Bowl commercial costs and you get a sense of the enormous amounts of money involved in running a commercial on broadcast TV, cable, and online. In fact, the great majority of any client's budget—as much as 80 percent—will go to paying *media*. So, as you'd suspect, clients pay very close attention to how much media they use and how efficiently that money is spent. That discipline—media planning—is beyond the scope of this book and has already filled *thousands* of books with various strategies to maximize clients' media budgets. It's enough to say here that media planning is as much an art as it is a science, however many quantitative analyses and computer models are used. At some point, sooner or later, it comes down to a judgment call by a human being. And those judgments are sometimes flawed.

Now, let's get back to point of that brief tutorial. The reason multimedia campaigns are the norm is to maximize clients' budgets. Paying to run a commercial—whether on broadcast TV, cable, movie theaters, or online—is going to be the most expensive of the paid-media choices. So media planners use other paid media that are less expensive to *support* the commercial. The holy grail of media planning is this: reach the right consumers as often as possible with the right message for the least amount of money. Using other media—like radio, print, out-of-home, and online banner ads—helps the media planner accomplish that objective.

Given that, how do you, as a copywriter (along with your art director partner), meet the requirements of a campaign with so many different media? As you have learned, a campaign is a delicate balance between uniformity and uniqueness. In a multimedia campaign, the inherent qualities of the various media already give the executions a lot of uniqueness. Everyone can see that a print ad is inherently different from a TV commercial, a radio commercial is inherently different from an out-of-home execution, and so on. So the very use of multiple media ensures a certain amount of uniqueness. Now, what about the other side of the delicate balance—uniformity? How do you get the uniformity when your message is delivered by so many very different types of communication vehicles? Well, it takes a lot of work, and that's why I've left multimedia campaigns until last. In my copywriting classes, I also leave it until last. We work in all of the media individually first and then we move on to multimedia campaigns, and the final project mandates a multimedia campaign.

Where do we start with such a seemingly unruly challenge as a multimedia campaign? Well, first we need to find out which media are being used (and as I said there usually are a lot of people involved in this decision, not just the media planners). Then, as a creative, you are most interested in whether there will be a TV commercial (which could also run online). If a TV commercial is in the media mix, then the TV commercial should *lead* and the executions in the other media should *follow* and *support* it. This is the single most crucial principle in learning to create a multimedia campaign. The commercial (whether broadcast, cable, online, or movie

theaters) leads because it's the most powerful of all media in creating and supporting brand personalities. In TV, the copywriter and art director have *everything* going for them—visuals, movement, sound, music, special effects, celebrities, humor. The list goes on and on. As a result, the best place to start in creating a multimedia campaign is with the TV commercial. Focus first on doing a great commercial (or several commercials if need be), and the rest of the multimedia campaign will fall into place.

There are many reasons why this approach works. First, it works because the commercial, as I've said, has *everything* working for it, and none of the other media do. Secondly, the commercial, regardless of where it runs, is going to cost the most money. And, finally, creatively, the commercial is going to present the most elements that can be carried over into other media. For example, the cute dog in the commercial can be used in the print ads or out-of-home ads or online banner ads. A jingle from the TV commercial can be used in the radio commercials (as can the announcer's voice, sound effects, etc.). So, by doing the commercial *first*, you can figure out which visual and audio elements are key in the commercial and then take them and thread them through the other media executions. When my students do multimedia campaigns, I ask them, "Where's the thread?" What I mean by that is: what visual or audio components are they planning to take from the commercial and thread through the other media executions? That thread is how you get uniformity in a multimedia campaign. And the commercial is where you start. Once you follow this principle, doing multimedia campaigns fall into place without a lot of drama. When a commercial is part of the media mix, the job of the other media is to *remind* our targeted consumers of that TV commercial or *prime* them for seeing it if they haven't already. So the other media *support* the TV commercial message, *reinforce* that message, and *extend* that message.

MORE ABOUT THREADS

As I touched on above, in a multimedia campaign we need to pay the most attention to uniformity, rather than uniqueness. The reason is that the different media will inherently supply much of the uniqueness. For example, a TV commercial is going to look very different to the targeted consumers than the print ads or the online banners ads or the radio. The more difficult challenge is to find a uniformity among these disparate elements that holds the multimedia campaign together and presents it as a whole.

The visual is a great way to supply this uniformity. As you learned early on, all great advertising is visual. It's the visual that grabs the target, holds them, and imbeds in their memories. If you have that kind of compelling visual, you're 90 percent on your way to having a great campaign. So in the case of a multimedia campaign, the place to start is with the visual in the TV commercial. First, of course, you need to come up with a commercial or commercials that have a compelling visual story. If you don't have that in your commercial, then you won't have anything to thread through to the other media. Once you're confident you have such a visual in your commercial, find ways to include that same visual in all of the other media—yes, even radio.

As I mentioned earlier, I did the first Gatorade campaign that positioned the brand as a sports drink for use before, during, and after physical activity. That campaign will serve as a good example of how to work with multimedia. Take a look at the print ads I've included earlier in the book to refresh your memory. The media mix included TV, radio, print, and outdoor billboards. I can't show you the TV commercials, so just imagine the three print ads coming to life. That's what the three TV commercials looked like—one for football, one for soccer, one for tennis. We held this multimedia campaign together visually in two key ways: one, by always showing men and women physically exerting themselves in the sports I've mentioned above and, two, by always including the visual metaphor of the lightning bolt hitting the Gatorade bottle. So those were our visual threads from the TV to the other media executions. Now, to reinforce the uniformity those visuals already gave us, I came up with a theme line for the campaign—"When you're thirsty to win." That, in turn, acted as the *copy* thread. So that's how the TV and print worked together, but what about outdoor and radio? Visually, the outdoor boards looked exactly like the print ads with two exceptions: one, there was no body copy, and two, even though we had different headlines in the print ads, we used the *same* headline in all of the billboards. What do you think it was? Right—"When you're thirsty to win." Because you don't want a lot of copy in a billboard anyway, the best solution all the way around is to just use your theme line as the headline in all the outdoor ads. This decision keeps the copy short and also gives the outdoor copy uniformity with the TV, radio, and print ads. Now, what about radio? Because there are no actual visuals, we have to find other threads from the TV commercial to bring into the radio ad. We didn't have a jingle in the TV, but we did have a very distinctive piece of original instrumental music playing under the announcer. So we took that instrumental music, coupled with the same announcer and much of the same copy from the TV commercial, and put it all into the radio ad. Then, at the end of all the radio spots we included our theme line—"When you're thirsty to win"—which gave them even more uniformity with the rest of the campaign.

In conclusion, when you have a multimedia campaign that includes TV, first come up with a compelling, memorable TV commercial, and then thread the key visual and copy elements from that commercial into the executions of the other media—Internet, print, out-of-home, radio. Always remember: TV leads the way. Everything else follows.

MULTIMEDIA CAMPAIGNS WITHOUT TV

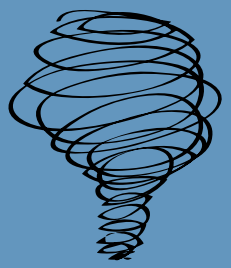
Now, what if there is no TV in the media mix? If the commercial is such an anchor for the entire multimedia campaign, as outlined above, what happens when there is no TV? Well, the answer is that all of the remaining media play much more of an equal role in meeting the campaign's communication objectives. Okay, you say, but which of the media do you start with if there is no TV commercial? Well, if you're using only static media, by which I mean print, out-of-home, and online static banners ads, then, as a creative, I'd personally start with the print. I think it will be easier to translate a print campaign to out-of-home and online banner ads then it would

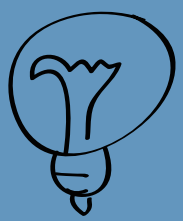
going in the other direction. Part of the reason is because the print will have body copy and the out-of-home and static banner ads won't. So it's easier to just drop out body copy than add it if you're working from outdoor and banner ads to print. Another way to decide is to determine which medium of the ones left is going to have the most dollars. So, for example, if 75 percent of the media dollars are going to the magazine print ads and the rest split between out-of-home and online static banner ads, then it's the print campaign that is going to be seen the most by our target consumers and so deserves the most attention and should lead the way.

Now, what if we keep all of the above media and also throw in radio? This is probably the toughest multimedia campaign to execute because it's so tough threading the key visual components from the print, out-of-home, and online banner ads through to the radio. However tough as this may be, I still think it's easier than doing the reverse—coming up with the radio ad first and then finding a way to thread it into the print, out-of-home, and static banner ads. The reason is this: the print, out-of-home, and banner ads have a lot more going for them—they have *actual* visuals, whereas the radio only has those in our mind's eye. As a result, I think we have a lot more to work with in going in this direction—*toward* radio, rather than *from* radio. So I'd recommend creating the print, out-of-home, and banner ads *first*, and then find a way to take the major visual and copy components from those into the radio spots. Here's a simple example: If there's a key visual of a dog in the print, out-of-home, and banner ads, then naturally you'd include that dog in the radio. The consumers won't actually *see* the dog, but they'll be able to *hear* him, and that should be enough to *remind* the target of that adorable dog in the print, out-of-home, and banner ads. In conclusion, because the print, out-of-home, and static banner ads have actual visuals, lead with them and let the radio play a supporting role.

Lastly, what about a multimedia campaign with only TV and radio (even if both of these are online rather than in traditional media)? Here, our job is much easier than in the above scenario. As you've already learned, TV always leads. So that's settled. Radio, then, follows from the TV and supports it. In terms of uniformity, it's also much easier because the radio has so many of the same components of the TV, so it'll be easy to find components from the TV commercial to thread into the radio spot. As examples, we would certainly want to use the same theme line or slogan from the TV; we could use the same announcer and other talent from the TV; the same jingle; the same sound effects; even the identical structure of the TV commercial can be translated into a radio spot. So a multimedia campaign utilizing just TV and radio would certainly be the easiest to execute.

In summary, the multimedia campaign is the most challenging, especially for those just starting out. But, as with everything else in this book, practice will make perfect. You will soon reach a point where everything that I have just spelled out for you here becomes second nature. You don't give it a thought. It's instinctual, as all great advertising is. But when you're just starting out, follow the guidelines I've outlined here. They will put you well ahead of others in executing effective, cohesive multimedia campaigns.





Part Three

Making a Living

Chapter Eleven

Career Advice

Supply has always exceeded demand in the advertising business, especially in advertising agencies. That is particularly true on the creative side. You should aspire to work in an ad agency because that's where the work you admire is primarily done. Some companies have what is called in-house agencies that act as a kind of ad agency within the company, but this is the exception, and that's particularly true is terms of quality. Most of the award-winning advertising you admire and would like to be a part of is done in ad agencies.

Getting a job in advertising, especially in an ad agency, is never a linear process. Every person in an ad agency has a story about how convoluted their entry into the business turned out to be. The most important thing to remember is this: no one is going to come looking for you; you have to go looking for them. As I said above, in a situation where supply of employees exceeds demand, ad agencies just don't have to put much effort into finding good people because good people will find them. In a job-search situation like this, you have to be extremely proactive, persistent, and confident. In a nonlinear job search such as this, you have to be everywhere, talking with everyone, every day. You cannot leave any stone unturned because your big break may present itself in the most unlikely place.

My advice is to talk with anyone at any agency that will see you. They will *all* tell you they don't have any job openings. Don't let this fool you. They always say that. Tell them you don't care, but would still like to meet them, ask their advice, etc. The key is to get in front of as many people in the business as you can. Then, if they like you, see promise in you, see a bit of themselves in you, then a job might magically materialize. And if it doesn't, then they might give you a couple of names of friends for you to contact. If they don't volunteer this, don't be shy about asking for a name or lead at another agency. You have to be assertive, confident (even if you don't feel confident), and simply not take no for an answer. That doesn't mean you should be unpleasant, rude, or pushy. It's a fine line, I'll grant you, but you need to find it.

As I look back on my life, I'm frightened by how many important opportunities revolved around pure chance. That was especially true of my advertising job search. I originally intended to be an account manager because I didn't think of myself as creative. But then I took a copywriting course in my graduate program at the University of Illinois and I did well and liked it. So, while everyone else in the grad program went into account management, I put together a book of spec ads and began taking it around to the ad agencies. I started in New York, where I got some interviews, but nothing else. I ran out of money and went back home to Chicago and began looking there. I followed the advice I have just given you. I called creative directors at every agency in town and asked if I could come in and show them my book. All of them said they had no jobs. I told them that was okay. I just wanted to see what they thought of my work. Because Leo Burnett employs more people than all the other ad agencies in Chicago combined, I focused a lot of my efforts on it. At such a large agency, there must have been 70 or more creative directors, each with their own creative group. All of them had the authority to hire a beginner like me if they liked me and my work. I must have gone back to Burnett 20 or more times and talked to as many creative directors. Sometimes the creative director couldn't use me and told me to call another creative director and sometimes I just called on my own. The important thing is this—I was always talking and showing my book to creative directors. You have to project yourself and be out there talking with anyone who will see you. You're not going to find a job by hiding under your covers at home. I'm confident I would have eventually landed a job at Burnett. In fact, I'm sure of it because Burnett's creative department manager, who handled personnel, told me so. I had impressed enough creative directors and passed the "persistence test" that Burnett was famous for. The logic of this persistence test among Burnett creative directors went something like this: if you weren't a "fighter," "hungry," assertive, and confident, you weren't going to succeed at Burnett *anyway*, so no need to hire you in the first place. Burnett was a very difficult place to work on many levels—long hours, lots of competition within and among the creative groups, lots of top-down creative direction from their Creative Review Committee, which had to approve all major new campaigns, etc. So why would anyone want to work there? Well, first, as I said, Burnett was by far the largest employer of creatives in Chicago. Secondly, they did *big* network TV campaigns that got lots of visibility among advertising professionals and often pervaded the popular culture (think Tony the Tiger, the Marlboro Man, etc.) and lastly, because working at Burnett long term—20 or more years—assured you of becoming a millionaire. This is before Burnett was bought by Publics, when they were privately held and enormously profitable.

So for all those reasons, it was smart for me to focus on Burnett, but JWT is where I really wanted to work. At the time they were doing my favorite campaign—the 7-UP Uncola campaign—and I really wanted to be there rather than at Burnett. I made the mistake of calling the creative department manager, who was the administrative arm of the department, and asking her if there were any openings. Of course, she said no. In the meantime, my dad was pestering me to call someone at JWT who I had met and took to dinner when I was president of my college chapter of the American Marketing Association. I had invited him to come to my college to speak on the Uncola campaign and afterwards I took him to dinner. This was nearly two years before, and I told my dad he would

never remember me. But my dad said, "So what? What have you got to lose, if he doesn't remember you, he doesn't remember you?" Well, I guess the moral of this story is to always listen to your dad, because when I called and introduced myself, he said he *did* remember me and would be happy to look at my book. Well, I went in and he liked what he saw. He immediately had me talk to three or four others, and they must have liked what they saw, because a week later I was in the executive creative director's office and he was offering me a job. The first week I was there, I still couldn't believe it. It was kind of dream. I was just thrilled! And I mean *thrilled*. I not only got a job, but I got one at the agency I most wanted to work at. Sometimes in life you get exactly what you want and, when you do, you have to savor it because it doesn't happen often.

My story is just one. Everyone in the business has had a similar nonlinear path into the business. If I had listened to the creative department manager instead of my dad, I would have been dead in the water. She was telling me the truth, of course. There *was* no job, but at the beginner's level they will *create* a job for you if your book shows real talent. You're not going to be making enough money for them to worry about it. So if they see something in you, it's worth it for them to take a chance. I think anyone in the business will give you the same advice. Get out there. Be everywhere. Talk to everyone. Don't ever give up. Don't ever take no for an answer. Act confident (even if you don't feel it). Be courageous. Believe in yourself. If you don't believe in yourself, no one else will. It's been said before, but it's so, so true, especially in this business.

GETTING INTO CREATIVE

Most young people who want to go into advertising, certainly those who major in advertising, want to go into creative. But very few of them actually do. And the reason is simple—they just never seem to get their books together. A portfolio of speculative ads is called a "book," so that's how I'll refer to it from now on. You can't get a job as a copywriter or art director without a book. And putting together a book on your own is tough for a lot of reasons. For one thing, it's tough just to have the discipline to work on it when there's no guarantee it's going to lead to anything. Writing on spec, whether it's advertising, a novel, or a screenplay, is one of the toughest things in the world. It's hard to keep yourself motivated and to take yourself and your work seriously when there's no guarantee anyone will read it, buy it, or employ you. Going back to what I said before, that's why it's vital to believe in yourself because at the beginning no one else might.

In my experience, in the business and as a professor, most young people only *dabble* at putting their books together. When they are offered a job in another part of the business, they feel compelled to take it. There are many reasons: because another one might never come along; because they have student loans to pay; because as much as they'd *like* to do creative, they're not willing to *suffer* to do creative. And all of those are fine and valid reasons. I'm not placing any judgment on their decisions. If you're faced with such a situation, all I want to impress upon you is this: you only live once. If you take a job in another part of the business, you probably will never again be considered for a creative position. Be sure you realize that you will be labeled, and it will be very difficult to change your career path from account management or media planning to creative.

Once you've gone to the "dark side," the creative directors with whom you'll interview will not take you seriously. Because you didn't stick to your guns, they'll think you lack passion. Their feeling will be that a *true* creative, with *true* talent would never even consider going into any other part of the business. So I tell my students who want to go into creative to "bet on themselves." In other words, get your book together and give yourself a year, even two, to find a job. After that, if you still haven't found anything, I'd say it's time for you to move on. At least you'll have the satisfaction of knowing you gave it your best and you won't have regrets later in your life.

IF NOT CREATIVE, THEN WHAT?

So while nearly every advertising student chooses the major because they want to go into creative, very few actually do. Rather, in my experience, most students wind up in some form of account management. This often happens by default rather than aspiration. When they chose advertising as their major, few of them have even heard of account management, let alone aspire to it. Yet, I'd say about 75 percent of the students I've worked with become entry-level account managers. Here are the most common reasons: as I've written, they don't go into creative because they just never seem to get their books together; they don't go into media planning because the media planning course nearly every advertising program requires scares them away; and they don't go into research/account planning because they don't want to apprentice for years in research before they're qualified to be an account planner. So, that leaves the default—account management. It might not be called that. It might be called project management, account services, production management, even traffic, but it's all account management. I think anyone in the business would agree that the account manager at an agency has the toughest job of all. He or she is the primary contact with the client and, internally, acts as the "hub of the wheel" on the account, around which all the other agency departments revolve. He or she is no one's boss, but everyone's leader—a very tough position to be in. No one should ever consider it a failure to go into account management. In fact, I have had several students who wound up in account management and at first were disappointed, but quickly found its breadth and demands exhilarating. It's certainly as challenging and fascinating as the creative side of the business. Just realize that once you spend a year or two in account management—or media planning or research/account planning—it will be next to impossible to change course and go into creative, for the reasons I stated above.

Students' least favorite part of the business is media planning. Very few students want to go into media planning for any number of reasons—it's kind of "mathematical," kind of dull, kind of unglamorous*, but* it's the place where the most entry-level jobs are and the least amount of competition. Whereas maybe 100 people might be vying for an entry-level copy position and 25 or 30 for an entry-level account management position, there might be only 5 or 6 vying for an entry-level media-buying position. Media planning requires a lot of media research, so there are many entry-level jobs to be had. It's the young people who pay their dues, crunching the numbers in media research, working late at night and on weekends, for very little pay. But it's the single best way to get your foot in the door at an agency. After a couple of years you move up—you might stay in media or

you could parlay your media experience into an entry-level account management position. Because so much of clients' budgets go to paid media, it is an excellent place to begin a career in account management. Whether you stay in media or move into account work, an entry-level media job overcomes the biggest obstacle to a career in advertising—getting your foot in the door. Once you get your foot in the door, you're on your way.

Next to creative, the toughest way to get into an ad agency is via research/account planning. I described the role of the account planner at a full-service agency earlier in the book, so I'd reference that to refresh your memory as to the account planner's function at the agency. Usually the most seasoned people become account planners. They may come from many different parts of the agency—certainly research, but also account management, and even creative. They could also come from *outside* of an agency—from an independent research company or from the client side. Because the account planner is the consumer's advocate at the agency, he or she needs to have an empirical and intuitive understanding of how consumers think and, most important, *feel*. They digest and interpret consumer research and then set a course with the strategy that the campaign will execute. They are the bridge from the research to the creative execution. They give the creative group its marching orders, and set the tone and character of the whole campaign. You can see why it requires a real pro. If, however, account planning is your passion, go for it. I'd never discourage a student from following his or her passion. The most linear path, as I said, is most likely by apprenticing with an account planner and doing his or her "leg work." That could go on for years. Then you might begin doing actual planning on smaller accounts and/or campaigns to test your skills. As I said at the very being of this book, ultimately the business of advertising is *people*. We call them consumers, but understanding people is paramount to doing effective advertising, so as the account planner you are right in the thick of things—central to everything else a full-service agency does for clients.

TURNING WORK INTO FUN

Ideally, your *avocation* should be your *vocation*. In other words, find something you *love* to do and then find a way to get paid to do it. If you don't love what you do, you won't be good at it. So don't go into something just for the money because if you don't love what you do, the money won't come. You'll never be able to compete with those who *do* love what they do, so, ultimately, you won't make the money for which you went into the field in the first place.

In my case, I never worked a day in my life. I was having fun and I'm still having fun, only now I'm teaching advertising instead of creating advertising. That should be everyone's goal—fun. Everyone spends one-third of their life working, one-third having fun, and one-third sleeping. If you turn the one-third of your life that you're working into fun then look what happens—suddenly you're spending *two-thirds* of your life having fun, instead of just one-third. Now, you've found one of the biggest prescriptions for lifelong happiness—loving your work. Whenever you're not sleeping, you're having a blast. That's where you want to be. And achieving that is much more important than making *any* amount of money. So, the moral is: pursue work

that makes your happy, not work that makes you money. If you're doing something you love, work that makes you happy, you'll be very successful, and the money will naturally follow.

LIKE A VAMPIRE NEEDS BLOOD

Advertising is a young person's business, especially in the ad agencies and especially in creative. Agencies need young people like a vampire needs blood. Most of the high-margin, premium-priced brands are targeted to men and women from 12 to 34 and even 12 to 24, or sometimes a bit older, 18 to 48. So it's vital that the agencies have people in those age groups. They can't employ 12-year-olds, so the next best thing is to hire 22- or 23-year-olds who at least remember what it's like to *feel* like a 12-year-old. That's why agencies *have* to hire young people who actually comprise the target markets to which they are selling. They will understand those targeted consumers better than anyone because they literally *are* the target market. You'll hear that phrase everywhere in the business—"he or she is the target market." Regardless of your discipline at the agency, when you're also the target market for whatever brand or campaign, your opinion carries enormous weight. Of course, they have done research and have all of that data, but now they also have *you*, sitting right here in the meeting, talking about yourself and by association the other consumers in that target market. Everyone takes note of that and listens very carefully to what you have to say. They know that it's anecdotal, but they also know that consumers within a certain target market share the same thoughts, feelings, experiences, and "quick-speak," and so your one voice is representative of millions of voices. For example, if I mention Hop-Along Cassidy, do you get all warm and fuzzy? Of course not, you never even heard of the guy. But if I mention him to a group of 65-year-olds, broad smiles of recognition will cross their faces. He was a famous radio and TV cowboy star from the 1940s and 1950s, and everyone of that era will know the name and the series. The moral is this—all of us are part and parcel of our generations. As a generation, we have a "quick-speak" amongst us that reflects our shared experiences growing up during a certain defined period of time. Those who share in those memories are *insiders* who understand those shared experiences better than *outsiders* because they *lived them*. Those are the people you want at the agency—setting strategy, creating ads, managing accounts. Like a vampire who needs blood, the agency needs people who understand the most desirable consumer target markets because "they *are* the target market."

So, being young is a disadvantage in one way because you lack experience, but it's also a tremendous advantage—you're *young* and your supervisors who have all that experience are *not*, so they desperately need you. Don't ever forget that, and don't ever be afraid to play your biggest trump card—*your youth*. In the advertising business, it's magic and it's *fleeting*. It will only last a few short years. Then that enormous advantage is over. Forever. So play that card whenever and however and with whomever you can. They need your youth and they know it. They have to hire young people and it's your job to make them hire *you*.

Chapter Twelve

Building Your Portfolio and Finding a Job

PORTFOLIO SCHOOLS

If you're determined to go into creative, rather than the one of the other three disciplines, but you just can't seem to get their book together, one solution is a portfolio school. Advertising portfolio schools are postgraduate schools that do exactly what their name implies—they put copywriters and art directors together, give creative briefs (assignments), and at the end of the program they have a portfolio. The better and bigger agencies, because they have so many people pounding on their doors, will only interview those who have been through a portfolio school. It's just an easy way for them to limit their interviews and place their bets on students who have more training, more maturity, and more spec work. So there are a lot of good reasons to go to a portfolio school. One reason *not* to go is that they are very expensive and time consuming. Tuition at most portfolio schools can run $20,000 a year for a full-time program, and many of them require a full-time commitment. At the less prestigious ones, you can cherry pick what courses you take and come and go as you'd like, saving some money and time. Before you spend that kind of money, I urge you to try to put together a book on your own first. The last part of this book will give you a start. Because all advertising is done to a strategy, many students who are putting together a book have a hard time coming up with their own strategies and creative briefs. I will help you by giving you the creative briefs and outlining the advertising campaigns that the creative briefs call for. When you complete these assignments, you'll have the building blocks of a book. Then you'll need to refine it to fit your own unique voice and talents.

BUILDING YOUR BOOK

When you're starting out, most everything in your book will be "spec." That's short for "speculative," and it simply means that the work you're presenting has been done to demonstrate your creativity, not actual work done for clients. As you gain experience, most of the work in your book will have been actually produced for clients as opposed to spec work. But even very experienced copywriters will have spec campaigns in their books that didn't get produced, but they love anyway and want to show off. That's perfectly acceptable.

Now, what's the overriding goal of your book? The single most important thing for your book to do is demonstrate your unique voice. When I teach classes, I call it your unique point of view (POV). Before you jump into the creative briefs, reread the sections of this book on creativity. If you remember, great creative *surprises* us with unusual and unexpected connections and POVs. That's what your book should demonstrate. You need to show that you have unique, unexpected, and unusual ways of looking at things. In the 1400s, when most everyone saw the world as flat, Columbus and others saw it as round. That's literally what you need to demonstrate in your book—fresh ways of *seeing* things. Fresh, fresh, fresh. That's what every creative director is looking for. You want creative directors throwing back their heads in surprise, astonishment, and joy! "Wow," they'll say, "I'd never think of approaching this brand like that!" Creative directors are looking for fresh POVs and unique voices that startle, rattle, and shake consumers out of their doldrums. Doing four or five campaigns that demonstrate this level of creativity is the goal of your book. Period. Everything else is secondary.

Now that you understand the overriding goal of your book, let's get into the specifics of actually putting one together. First, I'd recommend you execute *all* of the creative briefs in Chapter 14. If you remember, a creative brief is the culmination of the account planning process and sets out the strategy for the brand or company. It's done by account planners at larger agencies and those with other titles at smaller agencies. The creative brief gives the creatives their marching orders and sets out the requirements and parameters of the campaign. As I said, execute all of the creative briefs, but *only with copy*—no layouts, TV storyboards, or graphics of any kind. Leave that for later. Focus on your *big ideas* and coming up with truly unique and unexpected POVs—the overriding goal of your book. Doing layouts and TV storyboards at this stage will only distract you from that overriding goal. For print, out-of-home, and static Internet banner ads, use the format I've included here (Figure 12.1). Learn to *describe* your visuals with words—just enough detail to get across your idea, but not so much that it's long and cumbersome.

For the radio and TV ads, use the script formats I've already given you. Once you've executed all of the creative briefs in *copy* form only, go back over everything you've created and pick out the four or five campaigns you think are your best—that meet the "fresh test"—*then* take only these four or five campaigns and fully flesh them out with layouts, type, TV storyboards, etc. If you're a copywriter, you probably don't have the graphic arts talent you'd need to accomplish this. In fact, that's one of the big reasons why copywriters feel they need to go to portfolio schools. Because art directors are also attending the schools, they'll pair you up with several different art directors on several different campaigns. As a result, visually your book is going to look very professional. But,

as I said earlier, it's going to cost money. A lot. So before you take that leap, you might be able to give your book that same level of visual professionalism with one or more of these approaches.

The first thing you can do, of course, is just forget about doing any graphics for your book and just present it as it is—with descriptions of visuals instead of the actual visuals themselves. This will save your book from looking childish and amateurish because your graphic arts abilities are so weak. This is how I presented my book when I was looking for my first job. *But* there were no portfolios schools then, so *every* wannabe copywriter was presenting his or her book this way. Now, as you've learned, portfolio schools have considerably raised the bar in this regard. Creative directors and managers of large creative departments at giant agencies have become accustomed to seeing books with fully fleshed out executions in all media and even nonmedia executions of three-dimensional direct-mail pieces, sales promotions, and Internet-based games, contests, and apps. As a result, even if your ideas are fresh, fresh, fresh, they're going to *look* dull, dull, dull. The sheer breadth and force of your fresh ideas could overcome this. But it is a considerable risk. Creative directors and creative department managers have gotten *so* used to fully visualized portfolios that they've lost the desire to work through books that are copy only. Plus, as I've written, because all great advertising is *visual*, the fact that your book *has* no actual visuals is bound to limit its impact. That's going to be true no matter how well you've described your visuals. Even your explanations that you're "not an art director" and have "no graphics ability" might not be enough to overcome this disadvantage. So you can see, I think, how I feel about this approach. Because you're probably only going to get *one* shot at a creative director, you must make that opportunity *count*. So, what to do?

That brings us to your second choice. When you have culled your work and have four or five campaigns that you want to include in your book—all described on paper—you can then hire an art director to fully visualize what's in your head. This will be expensive, but not nearly as expensive as going to a portfolio school. Maybe you have a friend who will work with you for a reasonable fee. If you're still in college, you could advertise for a graphic arts student and then pay him or her for his or her work.

Lastly, you could actually partner with an art director right from the start and have, in effect, your own two-person portfolio school. So you and she or he could work on the creative briefs I have given you here as a *team*, just as professional creatives work at agencies. So you supply the copywriting and your partner supplies the graphic arts. Once your book is finished, the two of you can then go your separate ways and show the book separately (clearly letting everyone know that an art director worked with you) *or* you could present yourselves to agencies as a team. This is done all the time, and some agencies are okay with it and others hate it. You just have to work through it and find out which is which. In fact, many of these copywriter–art director teams are forged in portfolio schools. Two people just hit it off and love working together and produce fantastic work, so they decide to just present themselves as a team to the agencies.

Your final option is to go to a portfolio school. But you might want to at least try one of these other options first. As I said earlier, you have nothing to lose by trying to put your book together by yourself using one of the three approaches I have just outlined. But after coming up

with your book on paper, if you don't feel any of these options are going to get you the job you want, begin looking at portfolio schools. Remember that all portfolio schools are not created equal. Be realistic about your finances. You might have already gone into debt paying for your undergraduate education, so the last thing you need is more debt. Maybe then you need to find a school that allows you to go part time or cherry pick the courses you want and the times you want so you can keep your day job. Another little secret that not every beginner realizes is that you don't *have* to finish a portfolio school in order to get a job. You have to finish just enough of it to *get* a job. For example, you could really hit it off with an art director you meet in the first semester and both of you decide to skip the rest of the program and just do a book together. Even if that doesn't happen, and you're on your own, you should have enough good work for a book after just one year. So those schools that require a two-year program to graduate often have students leaving after one year. That's something to remember if you like a particular school but are put off by the two-year commitment. What's key is to examine the first-year courses and make sure you're actually doing creative, so you'll have something to show after the first year. Some schools are going to force you to take prerequisite courses the first year in order to get to the creative courses in the second year. This is obviously good for them because it keeps you there two full years. But it's not so good for you. In conclusion, if you've decided a portfolio school is the way to go, choose wisely. Certainly talk to the faculty—are they creative stars? Do they know what they're talking about? Even if they *do*, can they teach *you* to do it? Some of the most accomplished creatives are notoriously bad teachers and supervisors. I'd also insist on talking with some of their current students and alumni. Are the current students getting what they expected and need? Do the graduates of the school get jobs, and at which agencies—the best or the weakest? I'd even ask to sit in a couple of different classes to see if the fit seems right. In short—buyer beware. The more you investigate, consider, and explore, the better chance you'll have of getting what you paid for.

THE FORK IN THE ROAD

If you've decided you need the discipline of a portfolio school to get your book together, then you've reached the fork in this road we've traveled together. I think everything you have learned in this book will be of enormous value to you in your school of choice. Invariably there will be slight differences in approach, but I believe the principles you've learned from this book will be attested to by everyone in the business. So, even though I don't know you and haven't had you in my classes, I feel confident that I've given you a good start in realizing your dream of becoming an advertising copywriter (and an advertising art director, if you're on the art side). I wish you nothing but the best.

For those of you who are continuing with me on the last leg of this journey, I have further advice and more specifics to give you about the makeup of your book, the content of the creative briefs that I've included, and various alternate and hybrid paths you can take in realizing your portfolio.

WHAT SHOULD YOU PUT IN YOUR BOOK?

As I have said, the single most important objective of your book is to show off your fresh POVs and unique voice. Having said that, here are some other things to consider in putting together a book that's going to meet your goal—getting a great job!

1. Until you get the job you want, your book should always just enough detail to get across your idea be a work in progress. That means that you should always be refining it and making it better. If you have two or more creative directors tell you one of the campaigns is not up to the standards of the others, drop it. That exact situation happened to me. I had done an Arrow shirt campaign that I just loved, but a couple of creative directors at Burnett had problems with it, so I dropped it. As someone said, "sometimes you have to kill your babies." Every campaign you do you love like you would a child; it's one of your babies. But your book is literally only as good as its weakest link. If that weakest link is pointed out to you by two or more creative directors, heed their warnings and lose it. Few of them will be blunt with you and tell you to cut it, but watch for the subtle signs and body language. You can tell when someone likes what they're looking at, so don't fool yourself into holding onto work that's better off cut. That leads me directly into number two on the list.
2. Your book is a *sample* of your work, not every piece that you've ever done that you love. The reason I say this is because you're far better off showing three campaigns that are *great* than five campaigns that are mediocre. Even *one* mediocre campaign in your book will *cast doubt* in creative directors' minds about the campaigns in your book. Creative directors will wonder whether you can tell fresh, unexpected work from hackneyed, ordinary work. So, if you have any doubt about a campaign in your book, here's my motto: when in doubt leave it out.
3. Given a choice, you want to keep your book short and great rather than long and mediocre. Within that guideline, however, you should try to demonstrate your creativity in as varied manner as possible. You should show your skills in all media—TV, radio, Internet, print, and out-of-home. You should demonstrate your creativity in nonmedia MARCOM, such as three-dimensional direct mailers or sales promotion or interactive social media. You should demonstrate your wordsmithing skills in one or two pieces. Show off your visual thinking in *everything*. Demonstrate your understanding of film and its unique language. Well, you see what I mean. Variety will spice up your book and demonstrate that your fresh POVs and unique voice transcend media, MARCOM disciplines, and even advertising itself. In other words, some creative directors like to see nonadvertising samples in your book to round out their assessment of your talent. So you might want to include a short story you wrote or a short film you shot for YouTube.
4. The last tip is this: you might want to have two or three different books that you show at different agencies. For example, if you're interviewing at a primarily print, direct-response agency, you might want to show campaigns that particularly demonstrate your skills in that medium and/or MARCOM vehicle. The same would be true if you're interviewing

at a so-called digital agency. It might just be a matter of inserting two or three pieces here and there or actually doing completely different books. Only you can make this call. Experiment. See how things go. As I said, your book is never finished until you get the job. Until then, it's a work in progress that you're continually refining, perfecting, and expanding.

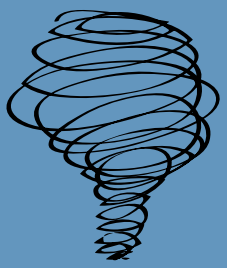
GOING IT ALONE

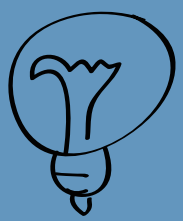
Instead of doing campaigns to the creative briefs in Chapter 14, you can go it alone. In my copywriting classes, I give similar creative briefs to the students throughout the semester, but then for the final project I allow them as a class to pick the product category and two or three brands within in it for the final campaign. Plus, rather than giving them the strategy, as I had done throughout the regular semester, I allow them to come up with their own strategies. They must follow my format, however, of target-market profile, brand promise, brand insight, consumer insight, and the sweet spot. The sweet spot is, in effect, the target they have to hit, the strategy their campaigns have to "pay off." You can take a minute now to reference the creative briefs to see what I mean. Now, to my point, the reason I give the students the latitude to come up with their own creative briefs and targets is because by doing so I also allow them to "work backwards." Here's what I mean by that: I encourage the students to first think of fresh ideas and not worry about the strategy that may or may not be paying off. *Then*, once they have the "big idea," they can work backwards and come up with a creative brief that fits it. This is a huge luxury for a creative. This is *not* the way it's done in a real agency. But it's a conceit that is acceptable when putting together your book because the truth is no one is ever going to know the better. Or care. As I said earlier, the primary purpose of your book is to showcase your fresh POVs and unique voice. Creative directors also like to see that you understand that all advertising is done to a strategy, so that's the purpose of including a creative brief with every campaign in your book—it demonstrates you understand this important fact and you can do campaigns that hit or pay off a strategy. *But* there is absolutely no way for the creative director to know which came first—the execution or the strategy. So, they don't worry about it. All they care about is that your executions actually hit or pay off the strategy. They don't worry about which came first.

Now, here's why this is so important in putting together your book. Being able to think of great ideas and *then* writing the creative briefs to *fit* them gives you an enormous advantage in accomplishing the goal of every book—showcasing your hair-raising, audacious, unexpected POVs. When I put together my book, I would go to a quiet place and just think of great ideas for advertising campaigns. I didn't worry about how, where, or when I was going to use them. It was pure brainstorming. And I highly recommend this approach to you. You'll have so much fun, and you'll find that when you're having fun your creativity soars. Plus, starting any creative endeavor like your book is so intimidating that this is the stage at which you're most likely to give up and quit. So keeping this first stage very *nonthreatening* and time-limited will help you get over that hump. I would just make a deal with myself that all I needed to

do was spend one hour every day in this kind of brainstorming. That's it. Then just keep it up—day after day, week after week—just spew great ideas. Then, when you think you have enough great ideas and fresh POVs begin stage two—the culling process. Refine, combine, and eliminate. Then, take what's left—presumably your strongest ideas—find brands to fit them and write creative briefs (strategies) that lead to the very campaign executions you have already come up with! This is a highly effective way to work for a lot of reasons. So if the thought of starting your book is too intimidating to overcome, try this approach and you'll quickly be on your way.

Of course, you could also come up with a kind of hybrid approach—use the creative briefs in Chapter 14 as a starting point and then change them to fit an idea you came up with for the brands I've chosen. You could also mix and match, by which I mean you can fill your book with a couple of campaigns based on my briefs and then come up with a couple of campaigns on your own. All of these various combinations are acceptable in putting together your book. In fact, *anything* that helps you put your book together is a good thing. So try lots of approaches until you find the one that works for you. All that's important is that you actually *get* your book together and it demonstrates your unique POVs and unique voice. Putting together a book is hard enough without putting up unnecessary and unhelpful obstacles. Take every advantage you can. My primary reason for including the creative briefs and assignments here is to provide you with a *catalyst* for getting your book started and completed. As I said, the single biggest reason wannabe copywriters never become real copywriters is because they never get their books together. These tips and the creative briefs are designed to get you started. They'll make the process far less intimating and overwhelming—and far less expensive than attending a portfolio school.





Part Four

Putting It All Together

Chapter Thirteen

Working with the Creative Briefs

WHAT'S WITH THE SWEET SPOT?

The term "sweet spot" is used in so many arenas that it's impossible to list them all here. I first came across the term in a book I used in my account planning class by Lisa Fortini-Campbell entitled, *Hitting the Sweet Spot*.[1] In it, she refers to that special button an account planner needs to push to get the target market to buy a product or service. I took it a few steps further in my teaching and made it the focus of the kind of emotional appeals that so often are needed to provide distinctiveness in parity-product categories. Furthermore, I combined it with a communication principle I learned at JWT that I mentioned earlier in this book called "stimulus and response." The principle or theory is this: in advertising it is our job to supply the stimulus that will *elicit* the correct *response* from the targeted consumers. It is *not* our job to give the targeted consumers the actual *response* they should have to the advertising. This theory is based on the idea that *all* communication is *two way*, even if it is mass communication like advertising. So, in the creative briefs in Chapter 14, the sweet spot is always in the first person and in quotes because it represents what the targeted consumers should be thinking, feeling, or even saying out loud to themselves upon seeing your campaign. So, in other words, your *campaign* is the *stimulus* that *elicits* the emotional *response* from the targeted consumers that provides them the impetus to *buy*. That response is the "sweet spot."

Strategically, this is a very sophisticated approach to advertising that is not for the faint of heart. It's tough to get your mind around it in the first place, and even tougher to execute it in your campaigns. But it's worth it because we know from decades of consumer research that nearly 70 percent of all purchases are made on *impulse*, in other words for *no rational reason*. You have also learned that parity among brands in a product category is the norm rather than the exception. For these two reasons alone, hitting the sweet spot with an emotional appeal will set your campaigns apart and touch your targeted consumers where they live—in their hearts.

MOVING TO THE SWEET SPOT

You'll notice that all of the creative briefs in Chapter 14 "build" to the sweet spot. First, we always start with a delineation of the target market. You can't do anything until you know who the target market is for your campaign. So if someone asks you to do an advertising campaign, your very first response should be—"Who's the target market?" If they can't tell you, then you can't do anything. Here's a very simple example of how influential the target market will be on your campaign. Imagine a campaign for Diet Coke directed to 12-year-olds. Got it? Now imagine a campaign for Diet Coke directed to 34- to 48-year-olds. What's the difference? Exactly—everything.

Now that we know who the target market is, we can begin to refine the message we want the campaign to convey. We begin with the brand promise. You'll notice that what I'm calling the brand promise is very similar to Reeves' unique selling proposition. I have renamed it because I think the term "promise" more accurately describes what you need to communicate at this stage. The brand promise is all about the brand in *reality*, as it was with Reeves' unique selling proposition. It's all *head*, not *heart*.

From there, we progress to the insights. An insight is not an explanation or description. It is a revelation—first about the brand, then about the targeted consumer. At this point, I go back to some of Fortini-Campbell's thinking in *Hitting the Sweet Spot*. But I go a bit further in the sense that I think of the brand insight as 75 percent *head* and 25 percent heart, whereas I think of the *consumer* insight in the reverse—75 percent *heart* and only 25 percent head. I'm getting very "measured" here because I'm slowly taking these briefs (and *you*) from rational thinking by advertising professionals like us to the *nonrational* motivations that comprise 70 percent of consumers' buying decisions. You'll also notice I put the consumer insights in the first person and enclose them with quote marks. I do this to help you "get into the skins" of your targeted consumers. You need to "get into their skins" because you need to *empathize* with your consumers if you're ever going to have a hope of manipulating them. You have to *feel* what they feel.

Finally, we progress even deeper into our consumers' hearts and wind up at the sweet spot. The sweet spot is 100 percent heart. And at this point, it's no longer about the brand, it's all about the consumer. Refer back to the section on emotional appeals in the first part of this book. If you remember, we learned that when we make an emotional appeal that appeal should *reflect* the target market's meaning system. Also remember that we had two circles—one represented the consumer and the other the brand. When we brought these circles together, the part at which they overlapped was called the sweet spot. Instead of circles, Fortini-Campbell uses an equation to describe the same thing: brand insight + consumer insight = the sweet spot.[2] This is equally valid. I just think visualizing something always helps in its understanding, so I used the circles. Also, I express the sweets spots in the first person and in quote marks in the creative briefs because these sweet spots are *human truths* that transcend advertising and go right to the core of the target market's meaning system. Putting them in the first person and quotes drives home the point that the sweet spot is the *response* we want the target market to have upon seeing our campaign. The campaign *elicits* the consumer's *response* that, in turn, will encourage him or her to buy our brand.

The logic of the sweet spot is that because consumers are making purchase decisions three out of four times based on *feelings*, not *reason*, then our advertising has to *appeal* to them with *feelings* and *not reason*. Our advertising has to connect with our target market where they *live*—in their *hearts*.

Now, having said all that, as a beginner, it might be difficult for you to "pay off" the sweet spots. I know it is difficult for my students, and I'm actually working with them one-on-one. So, if paying off the sweet spot in the creative briefs proves too daunting, forget them and instead pay off the *brand promise*, which, as I said, is very much like a Reeves' unique selling proposition. I say this because anything that gets in the way of you putting your book together is a bad thing. As I discussed earlier, it's very difficult for you to put your book together on your own, and we don't want to throw obstacles in your path. So if paying off the sweet spot becomes such an obstacle, lose it. Don't let anything stand in the way of putting your book together. Indeed, you might find that you can mix and match here. So, on some of the briefs, you might feel that you've been successful at paying off the sweet spot and on others you might decide to pay off the brand promise instead. As I said, the most important goal of your book should be to showcase your fresh POVs and unique voice. It's *not* about strategy, so don't let strategy rain on your creative parade. The strategies—or as I describe them, sweet spots—are here as targets for you to hit with your executions, and in so doing, demonstrate your understanding that all campaigns are executions of a strategy.

Using the brand promise as the target is the way I used to teach my copywriting course before I moved on to the sweet-spot approach. This is a much more direct and "doable" approach when you're starting out. You'll notice that in every case the brand promise is stated in this syntax: "XYZ brand gives you … WHAT?" I use this sentence structure because it makes it very clear what you are *promising* your target consumers if they buy your brand. I'd say that all of the brand promises I have in these briefs are what I termed as "2a" in the section on Reeves' USP. In other words, the brand promises are *not* unique to the *brand*, but *are* unique to the category. So, if you remember, I illustrated this with the Wonder Bread example. The USP was "Wonder Bread builds strong bodies 8 ways." But *all* brands of packaged, presliced white bread "build strong bodies 8 ways," not just Wonder Bread. However, even though this is true, Wonder Bread made this claim in the category *first*, and so it "owns it" and (with enough advertising dollars) consumers will gradually come to believe that only Wonder Bread "builds strong bodies 8 ways." As Reeves says, "it takes on the cloak of uniqueness."

GETTING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED INTO YOUR BOOK

Hopefully, you've learned a lot from what I've written here and you'll demonstrate that by getting it all into your book. Remember, that's what your book is—a *demonstration* of your unique POVs and voice.

The creative briefs in Chapter 14 include brands from wildly different product categories—everything from Method house cleaning supplies to Yellowstone National Park. I did this

deliberately because I believe it's important to show diversity and variety in your book. You want to impress creative directors with your versatility in all respects, and being able to work in different product categories with very different brands is an important part of that. Furthermore, you'll feel an affinity to some product categories more than others. So the wide variety I've included here should give everyone three or four brands and product categories that give them the best chance to do their best work.

The briefs are ordered as I assign them to my students. They all call for a campaign, which traditionally comprises at least three executions. You can do more, but do at least three. The first campaigns are all print—magazines rather than newspapers, because magazines are used more often in brand advertising that seeks to create a brand personality. I like to start with print because, as I said before, "it stays in one place." It's static, and that makes it easier for you to succeed at the beginning when you're most likely to get discouraged and quit. I want to build your confidence at the beginning so your success keeps you creating. From there we move to radio, then TV, then multimedia, and even multimedia-multi-MARCOM. For example, in the campaign for Yellowstone National Park, a TV commercial and a three-dimensional direct-mail piece are called for. Only the TV commercial utilizes a medium—TV—whereas the direct-mail piece, as we learned early in the book, is a separate marketing-communications vehicle or subset, equal to advertising. Advertising is the only MARCOM vehicle that uses a medium—print, radio, TV, out-of-home, or the Internet. Feel free to do more executions in the same advertising medium or others; in the same marketing-communications vehicle or different ones. To go back to the Yellowstone example, you could add an Internet banner ad to the campaign or an interactive Internet component that uses social media, YouTube, the brand or company's own website, etc.

Always remember that my purpose of including these briefs is to *get you started*. That's always the hardest part of any project—getting started. So you want to remove as many obstacles and impediments as you can. That's what these creative briefs are designed to do—give you a running start. Once you get going and build confidence, you'll be emboldened and start adding and subtracting from the briefs and the assignments contained within them. That's all the better. Make sure these briefs are working *for you*, not *against you*. *You're in charge*. Mix, match, add, subtract. Do whatever it takes to meet the goal of your book—fresh, fresh, fresh. Given how important the Internet has become, I think it would be a good idea to include Internet executions in all of your campaigns. How would your campaign work on Google, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, Pinterest, third-party websites, and your company or brand's own website? This "marrying" of traditional executions such as TV with new-media executions will demonstrate your fresh thinking across many platforms. Nothing could be more impressive to creative directors.

One last word about the creative briefs—the brand or company description I have given you is *incomplete*. It's just a start to orient you. From there, you need to dig, dig, dig. Find out everything you can about your brand or company and also its competitors. If you remember, I set this out way back in the print section on body copy for paragraph two—where you prove the promise you made to me in your headline. Fortunately, with the Internet, you now, literally, have the world at your fingertips. So there's no excuse for not digging. I've deliberately given you brands and companies that you might

not have heard of and whose advertising is either nonexistent or so inconsequential you're not aware of it. I did that because I don't want you to be influenced by what's already out there. This will make it easier for you to stamp your voice and unique POVs on these brands and companies.

CAMPAIGN CHECKLIST

As you know, I think it's important to present campaigns in your book, rather than just individual executions. One big reason is that this allows you to demonstrate your creativity in a wide variety of traditional, new, and social media. Secondly, I believe it demonstrates that you can think of *big* ideas that have the breadth, longevity, and scope to "move millions" in media and nonmedia platforms, in a truly integrated marketing communications respect. You should also refresh your memory on effective campaign thinking, which I addressed earlier in the book. Then, once you've fleshed out a campaign, use the checklist below to make sure you have met all the requirements of a campaign.

Does your campaign "hit" the target market it is directed to and "pay off" the strategy that you have set out in the creative brief? I'd include a one-page creative brief before every campaign. This can be the ones I've given you or reworkings of them or your own briefs. The only important thing is that you *have* a target market and a strategy that your campaign is "hitting" and "paying off." It's important that you demonstrate this ability to work within the confines of the strategy and, indeed, within the confines of the entire creative brief. Creatives seldom have input into the strategy. Rather, they are judged by how well they have *executed* that strategy. So you need to show that you can do that in your book. In terms of the briefs I've given you, you can pay off the brand promise if you find it easier than executing the sweet spot. However, if you *are* using my sweet spots as your strategies, be sure you are executing them, rather than the brand or consumer insights. Remember Ms. Fortini-Campbell's equation from *Hitting the Sweet Spot*: brand insight + consumer insight = the sweet spot. The brand and consumer insights are the means to the end. The end is the sweet spot.

Is your campaign visually compelling and memorable? As I said, all great advertising is visual. If your campaign is *not* visually compelling, then you simply haven't done a great campaign. Period. So start over. It doesn't matter that you're the copywriter. The visual component is too important for you to just sit back and let the art director worry about it. You have to show that you will be an *active* participant in thinking of powerfully persuasive and memorable visuals. Demonstrate that you can write with images, as well as with words.

Do all of your executions—regardless of media or even if they are nonmedia—have synergy? Is it clear to your target market that these various executions in various media and nonmedia are all part of the same campaign, hitting the same target market, with the same strategy? Do you

have visual and copy threads running through them *all* that clearly identify the executions as *components* of a *whole* (i.e., the campaign)?

If your campaign includes print, do your headlines do the two things every headline must—state the benefit to the targeted consumers *and* do it in a clever, memorable, creative way? Be careful of lingering "caterpillars"—headlines that have the consumer benefit or promise, but are not clever, memorable, or creative enough to be "butterflies."

If your print has body copy, does this "miniature persuasive essay" provide proof to the target market that the promise you made to them in the headline is true, and attested to by objective and independent *facts*? Have you followed the "three-paragraph rule," with your first and third paragraphs repeating the headline?

Did you follow the correct and accepted formats in radio and TV? Using the correct format for radio and TV scripts and storyboards identifies you as a professional.

Finally, is your work neat, grammatical, correctly spelled, with proper usage, caps, and punctuation? Being sloppy in some or all of these regards does *not* identify you as a cool creative, just as a potential embarrassment for the agency or company you want to work for.

That's a lot of balls to keep in the air at one time. You're kind of like a juggler who shows his or her mastery by how well and how long you keep those balls flying. It's never easy, especially when you're just starting out. To help you, here's another checklist of sorts that I give to my students that always seems to keep them on track.

TOP 10 WAYS TO GREAT ADVERTISING

1. Know who the target market is.
2. Know what the target market wants.
3. Develop a strategy that gives the target market what it wants
4. Translate that strategy into a simple, clear benefit promise to the target market.
5. Translate both the strategy and the benefit promise into clever, memorable visuals and words.
6. Be visually compelling and memorable, even in radio.
7. Keep all your executions simple, single-minded, and completely focused on the benefit promise to the target market.
8. Make sure you headlines contain the benefit promise, stated in a clever, memorable way.
9. Keep your body copy as short as possible, and *objectively* persuasive about the consumer benefit promise.

10. Make it absolutely clear what it is that you want your target to do—your call-to-action—be it a QR code, going to a website, calling a toll-free number, using a coupon, going to a particular retailer … whatever.

Whew! Now, it's up to you. Good luck!

NOTES

1. Lisa Fortini-Campbell, *Hitting the Sweet Spot* (Chicago: Copy Workshop, 1992), 15.
2. Fortini-Campbell, *Hitting the Sweet Spot*, 47–50.

Chapter Fourteen

The Creative Briefs

An idea that is not dangerous is unworthy
of being called an idea at all.

—OSCAR WILDE

When I'm about to start a new project—advertising or otherwise—this quote from Oscar Wilde always comes to mind. It inspires me to reach, stretch, and never be afraid. Extraordinarily fresh ideas are always scary. That's not a bad thing. In fact, it's a sure sign you're onto something great. I hope this quote reminds you of that. And gives you the courage it has always given me.

Brief #1

THE CLEVELAND ANIMAL PROTECTION LEAGUE

The Cleveland Animal Protection League is an independent, nonprofit humane society serving Cuyahoga County. It rescues over 10,000 animals per year and is currently the largest animal shelter in Northeast Ohio. The agency offers shelter to homeless pets and promotes compassionate and responsible guardianship of animals. It is strictly a no-kill facility. In addition, the Cleveland Animal Protection League battles to end animal abuse and neglect through its humane investigations. The league is not funded or controlled by any national animal welfare organization or by any government entity.

Campaign Objective

Place the League's old, frail dogs and cats with new families.

Target Market

Men and women
Ages 35–69
Some college
$60,000+
Single or married
With and without children

Brand Promise

The Cleveland Animal Protection League gives you our commitment to place 100 percent of all old and frail animals.

Brand Insight

The Cleveland Animal Protection League is the most effective means of helping old, frail dogs and cats.

Consumer Insight

"Everyone loves puppies and kittens, but who will love these old and frail animals?"

The Sweet Spot

"Old, frail dogs and cats need my love first."

Your Mission

Create a magazine campaign that consists of at least *three* full-page, four-color ads that will appear in magazines such as *Cleveland* and other similar local and regional publications.

Insider's Tip

Placing puppies, kittens, and young dogs and cats is *easy*. This campaign is designed to persuade our target market to adopt *old*, *frail* dogs and cats, who are most likely to *languish* at the facility, soaking up precious dollars. Don't miss or stray from this focus.

Brief #2

METHOD HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS

Popular brands of household cleaners overshoot their mark—using harsh chemicals to kill relatively benign organic things such as dirt. Method household cleaners, however, are biodegradable, nontoxic, and *never* tested on animals. They have a fresh, natural scent indicative of their all-natural ingredients. Best of all, their efficacy and price are comparable to the leading brands.

Campaign Objective

Make the target market aware that effective house cleaning can shun chemicals and be biodegradable, nontoxic, and human- and animal-friendly.

Target Market

Men and women
Ages 23–48
College+
$90,000+
Single or married
With and without children

Brand Promise

Method gives you cleaning power without the chemicals and toxins.

Brand Insight

Method cleans the house, but also meets the higher purpose of keeping our homes and environment "clean" from harmful chemicals and toxins.

Consumer Insight

"I won't choose between having a clean house and a clean environment; I want both."

The Sweet Spot

"My eco-principles define me as an enlightened human being."

Your Mission

Create a magazine campaign that consists of at least *three* full-page, four-color ads that will appear in magazines such as *Real Simple*, *Women's Health*, and *Good Housekeeping*.

Insider's Tip

Method is about more than just cleaning. It's a *statement* about how the target market believes we should live our lives—responsibly, "cleanly," organically.

Brief #3

SUKI NATURALS

Suki Naturals is one of the world's cleanest skincare companies and markets a wide variety of products under the Suki Naturals brand name. The company has signed the Compact for Safe Cosmetics, which means their products are just about pure enough to eat. Their minimalist design and low-key, herbal fragrance make them well suited for today's "new young women," who have enthusiastically embraced natural, organic, and sustainable ideals.

Campaign Objective

Create awareness for Suki Naturals in the crowded, heavy-spending cosmetics product category.

Target Market

Women
Ages 23–28
College+
$70,000+
Single

Brand Promise

Suki Naturals give you healthy, glowing skin, the all-natural, organic way.

Brand Insight

Suki Naturals are food for your skin.

Consumer Insight

"What I put ON my body has to be as nurturing as what I put IN my body."

The Sweet Spot

"My skincare is pure enough to eat."

Your Mission

Create a magazine campaign that consists of at least *three* full-page, four-color ads that will appear in the printed and digital versions of magazines such *InStyle*, *Cosmo*, and *Women's Health*. In addition, modify the print ads and create *three* static banner ads for a variety of websites directed to young, professional women.

Insider's Tip

The seemingly outrageous claim that Suki Naturals are pure enough to eat offers enormous opportunities for compelling and memorable executions.

Brief #4

CLIF SHOT ENERGY GELS

Clif Shot Energy Gels, from the makers of Clif Bars, are the only organic gels on the market and contain a short list of ingredients—brown-rice syrup, fruit puree, sea salt, and minerals. Clif Shot gives a healthy dose of fast-acting, easy-to-digest carbs and electrolytes when you need them most. Great to have on long bike rides and runs, these gels are portable and easy to use anywhere.

Campaign Objective

Create a dynamic brand personality for Clif Shot that reflects its dynamic, outdoorsy target market.

Target Market

Men and women
Ages 19–38
In college, college, and college+
$20,000–$70,000+
Single or married

Brand Promise

Clif Shot gives you an energy boost that's healthy.

Brand Insight

A boost that's *not* healthy is not a boost at all.

Consumer Insight

"When I hit 'the wall,' Clif Shot blasts me through it."

The Sweet Spot

"BAM!—explosive energy in a gel."

Your Mission

Create an outdoor-billboard campaign of at least *three* billboards. Use traditional boards, not digital, but money is *no object*, so *extend* and *violate* the boards in any way you choose.

Insider's Tip

Have some fun with this sweet spot! Use the open-ended budget to create outdoor boards that are arresting, compelling, and memorable. Many students take the sweet spot too literally—by having Clif Energy Gel exploding all over the board. This is not appetizing and puts the focus on the brand's *feature*, rather than its *benefit* to the target market. What should be exploding is the *energy* of the *people* who have *used* Clif. This is a good lesson in keeping your focus on the brand's key benefit, rather than the brand's physical features/attributes.

Brief #5

TITO'S HANDMADE VODKA

Tito's Handmade Vodka is microdistilled in Texas in an old-fashioned pot still, just like the single-malt Scotches and high-end French cognacs. This time-honored method requires more skill and effort than modern column stills, but it's well worth it. Only the heart of the run, the "nectar," is taken, leaving behind residual higher and lower alcohols. The vodka is then cleansed of phenols, esters, congeners, and organic acids by filtering it through the finest activated carbon available. This handcrafted technique offers more control over the distilling process, resulting in exceptionally clean and flavorful vodka.

Campaign Objective

Use the legendary swagger of Texas to create a brand personality for Tito's Handmade Vodka that this young, male target market can make their own.

Target Market

Men
Ages 21–28
In college, college, and college+
$20,000–$70,000+
Single

Brand Promise

Tito's Handmade Vodka gives you the swagger of Texas in a bottle.

Brand Insight

Tito's Handmade Vodka is pot-stilled, Texas-style vodka you won't soon forget.

Consumer Insight

"What's the point of life if you can't raise a little hell."

The Sweet Spot

"Tito's Handmade Vodka embodies the do-or-die swagger of Texas that I love."

Your Mission

Create a print campaign consisting of at least *three* full-page, four-color ads that will appear in the printed and digital editions of men's magazines such as *Men's Health*, *Details*, and *Men's Journal*. Plus, create one YouTube video that has synergy with them. This is *not* a paid-commercial pre-roll. This is a video you hope will be found, shared, and eventually go viral. Because the video is a MARCOM vehicle other than advertising, this is your first IMC campaign.

Insider's Tip

Just as Corona is selling the kicked-back, Mexican-beach lifestyle, Tito's is selling Texas—attitude, cowboys, longhorns, etc. This campaign needs to rub some of that Texas attitude onto Tito's Handmade Vodka. For inspiration, watch the DVD *Inside Saachi & Saachi*. It's distributed by Insight Media and should be available in libraries and possibly online.

Brief #6

ZICO PURE PREMIUM COCONUT WATER

Zico (pronounced ZEE-koh) is 99.9 percent coconut water, harvested by hand from green coconuts that grow on trees all over the world. Zico is low in sodium, high in potassium, and only 60 calories per 14-ounce bottle. Zico is an all-natural hydrator whose ingredients quickly absorb into the body, replenishing it during and after strenuous activities. It's the perfect choice for quick hydration without artificial ingredients.

Campaign Objective

Make Zico synonymous with coconut water before another brand beats it to the punch.

Target Market

Men and women
Ages 19–35
In college, college, and college+
$20,000–$70,000+
Single and married

Brand Promise

Zico gives you a new and delicious sports drink that enhances your vigorous lifestyle.

Brand Insight

Zico is a sports drink that's refreshingly different in so many ways.

Consumer Insight

"Sports drinks—been there, done that. What's new?"

The Sweet Spot

"I want to shake up the monotony of my workout … and my life."

Your Mission

Create a campaign consisting of three 30-second radio spots that will run on Pandora, Spotify, and traditional broadcast and satellite stations.

Insider's Tip

Great radio is as visual as any other medium. Keep words to a minimum and fill out your commercials with sound effects, word sounds ("um," "uh," "huh?" etc.) music, music and lyrics, etc. Write dialogue like people really talk—in phrases, single words, and word sounds—not full sentences. Use Zico's unusual brand name to have some fun and at the same time build name recognition and brand awareness.

Brief #7

LIFETIME FITNESS

LifeTime Fitness is a chain of fitness centers that offer a wide variety of activities for any interest and any age. LifeTime Fitness centers are sleek, modern, and inviting. They have the latest equipment, complete aquatic centers, state-of-the-art basketball and racquetball courts, classes, and personal training and nutrition guidance.

Campaign Objective

Elevate Lifetime above the competition by reflecting the religious devotion many people have to their workout regimens.

Target Market

Men and women
Ages 23–34
College+
$90,000+
Single and married
Some with young children

Brand Promise

LifeTime gives you an environment that celebrates the fun of staying fit.

Brand Insight

LifeTime creates a fitness environment that makes working out the transforming event of your day.

Consumer Insight

"I bring a religious fervor to my workouts."

The Sweet Spot

"Working out is a religious experience to me."

Your Mission

Tito called for print and a YouTube video, but this marks your first true multimedia campaign. Create a campaign that consists of one 30-second TV commercial that will run in traditional media, as well as on alternative/new media such as YouTube and Facebook; one 30-second radio spot that will run on Pandora, Spotify, and satellite stations; one full-page, four-color magazine ad; and three out-of-home locations of your choice.

Insider's Tip

Remember, in a multimedia campaign that consists of a TV commercial, the commercial *leads* the other media executions in terms of its themes, visuals, copy, and campaign slogan. These elements then should be threaded through the other media executions, thereby serving to reinforce the commercial among the targeted consumers and supply a unifying campaign look and feel.

Brief #8

JOVAN SEX APPEAL COLOGNE

Jovan is a boutique fragrance company, known for overtly promoting the sexual allure of its signature fragrance—Jovan Musk Oil for Men. Currently, well over 50 percent of Jovan's revenues come from this one brand, and the target market is aging. To broaden Jovan's appeal among those who use cologne for the first time—adolescents—Jovan has created a new brand—Jovan Sex Appeal for Men.

Campaign Objective

Make Jovan Sex Appeal for Men adolescents' preferred choice when they choose their very first cologne.

Target Market

Boys
Ages 12–18
Middle school and high school
Discretionary income from parents and relatives
Single

Brand Promise

Jovan Sex Appeal gives you magnetic appeal to girls.

Brand Insight

Jovan Sex Appeal is *the* "fast track" to magnetic sexual attractiveness.

Consumer Insight

"I need sex appeal that is 'guaranteed' because I'm scared to death of girls."

The Sweet Spot

"Now I can 'turn on girls' by just walking into the room."

Your Mission

Given the very young target market, this campaign should use strictly new media. Start with a YouTube video that will create buzz and hopefully go viral. Then back it up with pre-rolls on YouTube and ads on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, and other social media sites. Create three radio spots to run strictly on Pandora and Spotify. Create a multiple-execution static banner-ad campaign that would run on middle-school and high-school websites and other websites (e.g., Kaplan's SAT and ACT study sites, etc.). This is your second IMC campaign.

Insider's Tip

Most adolescent boys are extremely unsure of their appeal to girls. Of course, they know that no fragrance can do it all, but their attitude is, "What the heck, it sure can't hurt." So your campaign should be fun, but still promise real hope to this highly insecure target. Although different from the traditional media used in the Lifetime campaign, you still have a YouTube video and TV commercial here, so make sure they *lead* the other media executions.

Brief #9

OXYGEN NEW BREATH FROM PEPSICO

As a pick me up after working out, a long day at work, or a long night of clubbing, Oxygen New Breath contains 12 to 15 times as much oxygen as regular bottled water. Bottled waters with an extra boost of oxygen hydrate better, enhancing energy, skin elasticity, and general feelings of well-being. Made with extra oxygen, dissolved under high pressure, Oxygen New Breath offers jaded consumers a new twist in the very crowded nonalcohol beverage product category.

Campaign Objective

Introduce Oxygen New Breath and create awareness for PepsiCo's entry into this specialty niche before other large competitors, like Coke and Nestle, join the fray.

Target Market

Women and men
Ages 18–24
High school and college students
Discretionary income from part-time work, parents, and relatives
Single

Brand Promise

Oxygen New Breath gives you a refreshing "kick" like no other.

Brand Insight

Oxygen New Breath is so different, that it's weird.

Consumer Insight

"I always have to be onto something new and different."

The Sweet Spot

"I'm a 'new-junkie'; I crave new experiences."

Your Mission

This young target is going to live online. Start with a YouTube video that will create buzz and hopefully go viral. Then back it up with pre-rolls on YouTube and ads on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, and other social media sites. Plan on the pre-roll commercial to also run on broadcast and cable TV. Create one radio spot to run on Pandora, Spotify, and broadcast and satellite stations. Create a multiple-execution, static banner-ad campaign that would run online and also in the real world as outdoor billboards. Create an online game/contest.

Insider's Tip

This IMC campaign has *two* other MARCOM vehicles besides advertising—the YouTube video, which is interactive, and the game/contest, which is sales-promotion. But these elements should still follow the lead of the commercial and have synergy and unity with your commercial and all of the other advertising elements of the IMC campaign.

Brief #10

OBERWEIS MILK

In 1915, Peter Oberweis found he had too much milk so he began selling it to his neighbors, and so began the 100-year-old story of Oberweis Dairy. Oberweis milk is sold only in glass bottles, and none of its dairy farmers use rBGH hormones on their cows. In fact, the dairy cows are treated like "family" because Oberweis knows that the milk it sells is only as good as the cows that produce it.

Campaign Objective

Create a holistic, small-farm brand personality for Oberweis that sets it apart and above its "mass-produced" milk-producer competitors.

Target Market

Women
Ages 28–48
Some college+
$70,000+ household income
Married
Two or more children

Brand Promise

Oberweis gives you milk that comes from happy, healthy cows.

Brand Insight

Oberweis does milk the "right" way.

Consumer Insight

"Old-fashioned, small-farm milk is healthier and tastier than 'regular' milk."

The Sweet Spot

"Happy cows make for healthier, more delicious milk."

Your Mission

Create a campaign that consists of one TV commercial that will run on broadcast and cable programs; two full-page, four-color print ads that will run in "shelter" magazines such as *Real Simple*, *Good Housekeeping*, etc.; plus three out-of-home executions.

Insider's Tip

You've got a fun sweet spot here with lots of potential for clever, memorable executions so—use it! Oberweis cows are "different"—pampered, happy, loved.

Brief #11

NURSE-ON-CALL

Goshen Health System of Indiana has created a community outreach service entitled Nurse-On-Call, in which the telephone representative is always a registered nurse. The nurse is available for *nonemergency* calls 24/7. Issues that Nurse-On-Call can handle include nonemergency health advice, medication questions, nutrition advice, allergy questions, and physician referrals within the Goshen Health System.

Campaign Objective

Introduce Nurse-On-Call to the Goshen/Elkhart and surrounding communities and within three months achieve 100% awareness of Nurse-On-Call and its primary mission.

Target Market

Women
Ages 28–78
High school and some college
Under $50,000
Married, divorced, or widowed
Two to four children
Geographically, Goshen, Elkhart, and the immediate surrounding counties

Brand Promise

Nurse-On-Call gives you quick, reliable, and free answers to routine medical and health questions.

Brand Insight

Nurse-On-Call is the only way to get health/medical advice without going to a doctor or hospital.

Consumer Insight

"I trust Nurse-On-Call like I would my doctor or a hospital emergency room."

The Sweet Spot

"I feel safe and secure in my community, and nothing is more important to me."

Your Mission

Create a two-minute YouTube video (*not* a pre-roll) that creates buzz. To reach the older age spectrum, create a campaign that consists of three, full-page, black and white newspaper ads. Write one 30-second radio commercial. Create a series of three billboard ads that would also be used as static-banner ads on Goshen Health System's website and three similar ads for Facebook. Finally, give this campaign IMC breadth with a three-dimensional direct-mail piece (usually utilizing a box) that includes Nurse-On-Call phone-number reminders (fridge magnets, pens).

Insider's Tip

There's no TV commercial, but there is a YouTube video, so that should lead the other media and direct-mail executions in visual style, themes, copy, and a memorable slogan.

Brief #12

YELLOWSTONE IN WINTER

Everyone wants to visit Yellowstone during the summer months, so no advertising is necessary. But no one wants to visit in winter. Yet, the experience of Yellowstone during this uncrowded time is pristine, magical, and ultimately more enjoyable. Because there are no crowds, no leaves on the trees, and no noise, winter is the best time to see the animals that the park is famous for—bears, bison, wolves, elk, moose. Frequent ranger-led walks, via snowshoes and cross-country skis, even at night with torches lighting the way, reveal the park in all its majestic glory.

Campaign Objective

Create awareness among targeted consumers that winter is the ideal time to visit Yellowstone National Park as a family.

Target Market

Women and men
Ages 31–52
College
$95,000+
Married
Two or more children

Brand Promise

Yellowstone in winter gives your family an unforgettable bonding experience.

Brand Insight

Yellowstone in winter is a feast for your family's eyes and solace for their souls.

Consumer Insight

"Yellowstone in winter will block out our busy, digital lives and bring us together as a family."

The Sweet Spot

"Bonding as a family is essential to our happiness."

Your Mission

Create a campaign that consists of one TV commercial to run broadcast and cable and as pre-rolls on YouTube, as well as part of a landing page for Facebook and Google ads. Using sales promotion as another MARCOM vehicle, design a game/contest for social media, Yellowstone's website, and other websites. Send a three-dimensional direct mailer to those in the primary target market who have visited Yellowstone, but in summer. They'll be most likely to visit in winter.

Insider's Tip

This campaign is *not* a travelogue. Yellowstone in Winter is the means to an end—bringing families together in these busy, digital times. The three-dimensional direct-mail would be delivered in a box and should include a "premium"—an object of some kind—that reminds the target of the commercial and that Yellowstone in Winter is *the* way to reconnect.

Chapter Fifteen

Odds and Ends

This is the chapter where I've put all the wise things I know about advertising that don't seem to fit anywhere else. It's like that drawer we all have where we stick important things that don't have a home of their own.

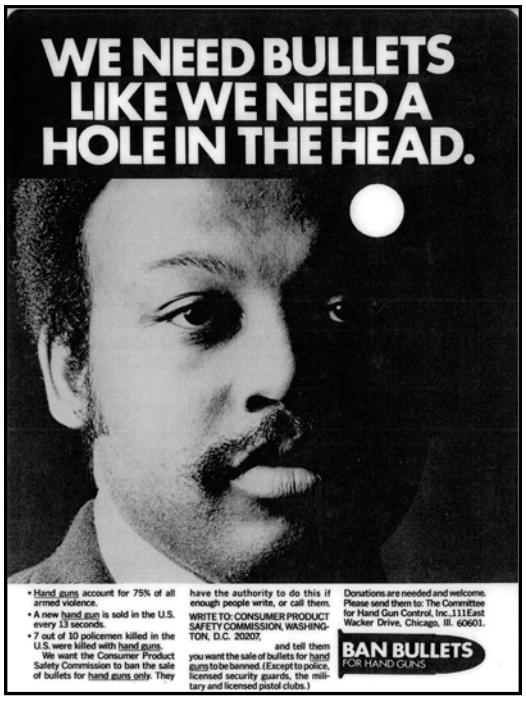
PRO BONO

Many times, young people who come into an agency are assigned *pro bono* assignments, often through the Ad Council, which acts as kind of a clearinghouse for cause-related campaigns that need advertising. The agencies donate the time and skills of their staff, media donates time and/or space, and vendors such as photographers, film directors, etc. donate their expertise. The agencies use young creatives on these campaigns because they aren't being paid very much, plus it's commonly thought among the creative community that cause-related advertising campaigns are easier to execute because they have built-in empathy. So they are good projects for young creatives to practice their copywriting skills—best of all, for a good cause.

As I described earlier in the book, I did pro bono work for the American Cancer Society to encourage mammography. Before that, however, I did a campaign with Derek Norman, my art director partner at JWT, that the agency took on locally. The campaign was for the Committee for Handgun Control, which consisted of several "society" women from Chicago's North Shore suburbs who donated their time and efforts to the organization. Their objective was to get the Consumer Product Safety Commission to ban bullets as a hazardous substance. I think you'll agree that it was a very novel approach to getting handguns off our streets. Derek and I were competing against the other four creative groups at the agency and our campaign was chosen. Later, once JWT realized what a volatile issue gun control was, the agency distanced themselves and Derek and I had to finish the campaign on our own time and with our own resources. This

WE NEED BULLETS LIKE WE NEED A HOLE IN THE HEAD.
• Hand guns account for 75% of all armed violence.
• A new hand gun is sold in the U.S. every 13 seconds.
• 7 out of 10 policemen killed in the U.S. were killed with hand guns.
We want the Consumer Product Safety Commission to ban the sale of bullets for hand guns only. They have the authority to do this if enough people write, or call them.
WRITE TO: CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207,
and tell them you want the sale of bullets for hand guns to be banned. (Except to police, licensed security guards, the military and licensed pistol clubs.)
Donations are needed and welcome. Please send them to: The Committee for Hand Gun Control, Inc.,111East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601.
BAN BULLETS
FOR HAND GUNS

Figure 15.1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BAN BULLETS
FOR HAND GUNS

Figure 15.2

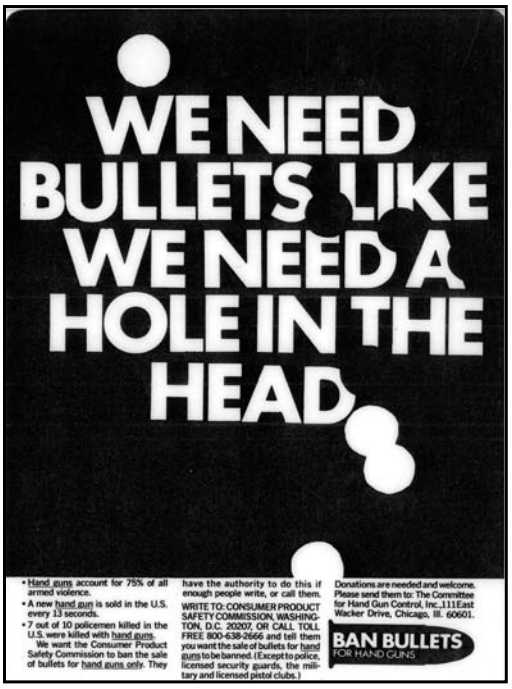

WE NEED BULLETS LIKE WE NEED A HOLE IN THE HEAD.
• Hand guns account for 75% of all armed violence.
• A new hand gun is sold in the U.S. every 13 seconds.
• 7 out of 10 policemen killed in the U.S. were killed with hand guns.
We want the Consumer Product Safety Commission to ban the sale of bullets for hand guns only. They have the authority to do this if enough people write, or call them.
WRITE TO: CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207, OR CALL TOLL FREE 800-638-2666 and tell them you want the sale of bullets for hand guns to be banned. (Except to police, licensed security guards, the military and licensed pistol clubs.)
Donations are needed and welcome. Please send them to: The Committee for Hand Gun Control, Inc.,111East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601.
BAN BULLETS
FOR HAND GUNS

Figure 15.3

TIME

Ban the Bullet

The campaign to regulate the sale of handguns more closely has consistently been thwarted by the argument that limiting a person's right to buy a weapon is an unconstitutional abridgment of his liberties. Now Susan Sullivan, a housewife in Winnetka, Ill., is trying a new and imaginative approach to the problem that might be summed up: If you can't ban the gun, ban the bullet.

Mrs. Sullivan's Committee for Hand Gun Control maintains that bullets are obviously dangerous objects that should be controlled by the Federal Hazardous Substances Act. Petitioning the Consumer Product Safety Commission in Washington, D.C., the group asks that bullet sales be restricted to the police, the military, and licensed pistol clubs and security guards.

"There is no way we can lose," Mrs. Sullivan declares optimistically. "How can they talk about bicycles and medicine cabinets and pins being dangerous, and not bullets?" She has some strong support. Free of charge, the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency is preparing a public relations blitz. Television spots, bumper stickers and posters feature the slogan YOU NEED A BULLET LIKE YOU NEED A HOLE IN THE HEAD.

WE NEED BULLETS LIKE WE NEED A HOLE IN THE HEAD.

Figure 15.4

was all before the Mac, of course, so the campaign has some rough edges, but I think you'll agree it's still very powerful. Derek thought of the visual first, and we decided to deliberately make the bullet hole stylized, rather than real. One reason was we didn't want to show dead people because it was just in bad taste. Plus, and this reason is even more important, we wanted to show that any person who is *alive* potentially has a bullet "with their name on it" (Figures 15.1-15.4).

This campaign is considered a classic example of a campaign designed for the purposes of political action. We knew that we'd never have enough money to run the ads in paid media because the issue was—and sadly still is—too contentious for the media to donate time and space. So the real purpose of the campaign was to get the attention of *free* media and have them expose the campaign for us. And that's exactly what happened. The Committee called a local press conference in Chicago and introduced the campaign, so it was in all the newspapers and on all the local news broadcasts, But the real coup was one of our ads being picked up by *Time* magazine and run in its "American Notes" section. For all of you who grew up in the digital age, it's hard to describe how monumental an achievement this was. During that period, *Time* had incredible reach and prestige. With as many as 20 million readers every week, *Time* was the Facebook and Twitter of its day. So the campaign definitely met its communications objective—it got buzz. That, in turn, got many citizens to write their members in Congress to pressure the Consumer Product Safety Commission to ban bullets as a hazardous substance—just as they would any other product that was unsafe for consumers. Unfortunately, as I said, the volatility of this issue made it impossible for the Committee to make any real headway with its ultimate objective. With the NRA and others jumping on members of Congress, the grassroots efforts of the Committee and the campaign lost momentum.

Just as I made the point earlier with the Ray-Ban campaign, it's important to shake things up throughout the life of a campaign. Notice what we did for the third ad in our series of three—no people. Since we did the first two ads with people, the target would be expecting the third ad to also have a person, so we did the exact *opposite*, the *unexpected*. You always want to surprise your target markets. For the third execution, we went with just the headline sprayed by bullet holes, as if it were a poster on a wall. I think you'll agree that if we had used this ad as the *first* in the series, instead of the *last*, it would not have been nearly as compelling as the people ads. But as the third ad in the series—a change of pace—it works perfectly.

WE'RE ALL SCARED

When you look in on award-winning copywriters from outside the agency, you assume they are confident, consummate, fearless professionals. They're not. They're scared silly. No matter how many awards creatives have won, how many years they've worked, when the assignment comes down at the input meeting, they're scared. *This* time will be different. *This* time I won't be able to come up with anything. *This* time I will fail. By now, they know how capricious their unconscious minds can be—sometimes it delivers and sometimes it leaves you high and *dry*. Will this be one of those times? Will I have to plan B it and force something from my conscious mind? Everyone creative, in every agency, is thinking the same thing when the account manager or creative director gives them a new assignment. And every creative copes in different ways. I had an art director in my creative group who would mask his terror with anger. "The goddamn suits never give us enough time!" "Who can do *anything*, with this kind of input!" "I won't work under these conditions!" And so forth. The first time I went through this tirade, I actually was afraid he was going to quit. He didn't. Then I recognized all this angst for what it was—total fear. That's how this art director dealt with his creative demons. This screaming, threatening, and accusing was just his way of venting the fear. As the days passed, it would gradually subside and one day it would be gone completely. Now, when I saw him in the halls, he had a wonderfully sanguine smile on his face, and when I would say "hi," he wouldn't hear me at all. He *had* it. He had *done it*. He beat the "advertising gods" again! That smile told me he had something *great* and I and everyone at the agency and the client would worship him for it. That's the way the creative process works. It's *always* a hair-raising, death-defying process that takes its toll on your nerves, but it sure feels wonderful when the clouds part, the sun shines, and the "aha!" moment comes. That first flush of excitement, thrill, and *power* makes it all worth it—at least until the next input meeting when terror strikes again.

"I LIKE YOUR BABY, BUT ..."

Every idea, campaign, visual, headline, body copy, etc. that creatives come up with are their "babies." They gave them "birth" as surely as any mother gives birth to her child. These "babies"

have come from deep within their unconscious minds. They're primal. Visceral. Personal. And, for them—profound. Yet, advertising is not about *personal* expression. That's what poetry is for. Advertising is *applied writing* for the purposes of awareness, persuasion, manipulation, and, hopefully, *sales*. Clients who are paying the bills have a lot at stake. As I've said, their corporations are built upon their brands. And when those brands don't sell, their whole corporate business model falls apart. So with so much at stake, it's no wonder that lots of people—inside and outside the agency—are going to have strong feelings about your babies. "I don't like your baby's nose," they'll say, "you won't mind making it smaller, would you?" "That dress your baby's wearing just doesn't work," they'll say, "what if we dressed her in this dress that I came up with?" And so forth. Day after day. Year after year. Decade after decade. Your babies get "improved," "modified," and, most frequently, of all—"killed." Yes, the great majority of your best ideas will never make it outside the agency. And through all this slaughter, everyone expects you to be "professional" and not take it "personally." What!?? Of course, you take it *personally*. "This idea is *part of me*. How could I not take it *personally*?" What they mean is that this process isn't happening to just *you*. It's happening to *everyone* who thinks of an idea. It's just part of the business. And they are right. You are allowed to fight for your babies, even encouraged to, but at some point everyone expects you to let your babies die. I can tell you from years of experience that it is very, very painful. It will break your heart. But then, you have to get up the next morning, go to work, and do the whole thing over again. This part of the advertising business is what drives creatives away. It just gets *too* painful. It just happens *too* often. At some point, you just can't take the heartache anymore. Sometimes it happens in portfolio school. Sometimes it happens after a couple of years. Sometimes it happens after two decades. But it always happens. You reach a point at which you can't lose one more baby. So you go into real estate. You become a screenwriter (and lose even bigger babies), you go into teaching, you retire to the beach, you write a novel (or a book like *this*!), or you just let the entire creative process *go*. You're burned out. Your soul can't take anymore. When that time comes, let's hope you've done some great work that you can be proud of. Because even though it may be over for you, the train always keeps moving. Brands need brand advertising to justify their super-premium pricing. And the corporations that own those brands need the profits they generate to please Wall Street. You may be tired of the slaughter, but the train keeps moving, and there will always be *thousands* of young people *fighting* for a place on it.

MENTORS

The bigger the agency (or company), the more you need a mentor. At a small agency or company, it's easy for the boss to see and appreciate your contributions. Not so at a large agency or company. Upper management might not even know you well enough to call you by name in the hallway, let alone know what fantastic idea you've come up with for them this very day. A mentor is someone older, usually also in creative, who sees something in you that reminds them of themselves. It's a chemistry that just happens between two people who

immediately take to each other and just enjoy each other. For some mentors, you represent a second chance, a redo in which you don't make the mistakes he or she made. For other mentors, you are as close to their clone as possible. You will continue *their* fight, *their* legacy, even though they have retired and will eventually be forgotten by most. From the protégé's point of view, mentors protect you at the agency. They talk you up at meetings you can't attend. They get you plum assignments you don't even know have become available. They guard your downside risk of making fatal mistakes that will compromise your career. Obviously, the higher up on the ladder your mentor is, the more he or she can do for you. Sometimes the mentor–protégé relationship just happens. Sometimes the mentor seeks out the protégée or vice versa. As a young person, once you get settled in at an agency, think long and hard about who will be your mentor. You might even have more than one. *Who* you will be your mentor is important, but *most* important is *having* a mentor. Without one, your upward mobility at the agency (or any company for that matter) will be stifled. Guess by whom? Some *other* young person's mentor! Exactly so. The agency is an extremely competitive environment. Everyone is fighting for the *opportunity* to do great work. Then, once they've actually done the work, they're fighting to make sure it gets to the client and ultimately produced. You can't fight this war alone. And you definitely won't win it alone. You need friends at the agency to help you, protect you, and nurture you. But what you need most of all for your career to flourish is a great mentor. Without one, you'll never get the opportunities you need to do the great work you've dreamt of.

TRUSTING YOUR GUT

When you're starting out creatively, it takes a bit of time to trust your gut. There's an excellent book on this subject, entitled *Blink: The Power of Thinking without Thinking* by Malcolm Gladwell. I recommend it highly. The "gut" that the author is referring to is just another term for the unconscious mind, which is how I've termed it in this book. As I said in the section on learning to think creatively, all your best, most unexpected, and most unusual ideas will come from your unconscious mind. I've gone into a lot of detail on how to get this infinite "computer" that's resting on your shoulders working for you. As you do, you'll eventually realize a startling fact—your unconscious mind is *miles* ahead of your conscious mind. The reason is because your unconscious mind can process so much more "data"—and much quicker—than your conscious mind. So when you follow your unconscious mind's lead, you find yourself doing things and you don't immediately understand why. But then, in maybe a few hours or days or even *weeks*, your conscious mind catches up. And then you *consciously* understand what you *unconsciously understood* long before. As this starts to happen to you more and more, you get to a point that I'm at —and others who have spent years listening to their unconscious minds—where you don't even question your gut. You just *go with it*. As I said earlier, it's best to treat your unconscious mind as a completely other person who just happens to be residing in your head, and one whose abilities are *infinite*. I believe my unconscious mind is my individual connection

to what many Eastern religions refer to as the "collective consciousness," and perhaps the "God" of our universe. It's not important whether you share this belief with me. I merely write it here to give you a clearer idea of your unconscious mind's *vast* capabilities. The more you tap into its potential, the more you'll find yourself saying, "Duh!" when your conscious mind finally catches up with *why* you're doing what you're doing. It's enormously fun! And it's very comforting, as if you're not alone up there in your mind, but have a mysterious friend ready to lead you to infinite possibilities.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY ...

Money is overrated. The two most important things in life are people and time. Both are irreplaceable. When they're gone, they're gone forever. In comparison, money is worthless. So be generous with your money and stingy with your time. To make matters worse, none of us know how much time we have. It's like having a checking account but never knowing how much money you have in it. Do you "spend" quickly, or do spend slowly and conservatively? Maybe you've got tons of time in your "account." And then again, maybe you don't. So, given this reality, I'd put the emphasis on people and time and less so on money. Spend your time with the people and work that you *love*. Hopefully, you'll have lots of time to spend, but you can never be sure, so you must spend wisely and resist the urge to put important people and things off to another day. A day that may never come.

DOG YEARS

While we're on the subject of time, this is a good place to mention how fast things move in the advertising business, most especially in agencies. I describe it to my students as dog years—every year you spend in advertising is like seven years in any other business. So a 30-year career in advertising feels like 210 years. No wonder I look so old. You could be away on vacation for one week and when you come back you'd swear you had been gone one year. Work has come and gone. Accounts have been won and lost. People have joined the agency and others have left—voluntarily or otherwise. The change is constant, fast moving, and unpredictable. People who thrive in our business think that's actually *fun*. Of course, it's not always, but for the most part people in advertising are easily bored and always seeking new stimuli. Advertising people—regardless of their department—are curious about *everything*. And I'm not sure if they're curious because they're creative (inside and outside of the creative department) or if they're creative because they're curious. It's kind of a chicken-and-egg thing—which came first? Whichever, those who thrive in advertising are the ones who dash for the roller coasters when they visit the amusement park. The slow-moving train that chugs methodically around the park is too predictable and plodding. They live for the stomach-churning dives, the unrelenting turns, and the unpredictable loop-da-loops. They're *alive*, and they want to make sure they know it.

FAILURE IS IN THE DNA OF SUCCESS

"Experience is the name so many people give their mistakes." That's a quote from Oscar Wilde, who you might not have ever heard of. He was a very successful playwright around 1900 and was known for his epigrams, which are witty turns of the phrase that often also carry volumes of good sense and advice. You admire people in our business because of their experience. But that experience is really just a long series of mistakes. Failure is in the DNA of success. Any great person, in any endeavor, has failed his or her way to success. They fail and fail and fail, but as long as they keep trying they are never a *failure*. You're only a failure when you stop trying—in effect, stop failing. There was a great billboard that I used to see on my drive from Chicago to Kent State. It had that famous photo of Abraham Lincoln that's embedded in all of our minds and the headline was: "Failed, failed, failed … then." If you've read anything about Lincoln, you know the truth in that headline. All of the great women and men fail on their way to success. What distinguishes them is that they don't stop failing until they succeed. Learning any skill is a process of trial and error, that is, *controlled failing*. You're going to make mistakes. In fact, in my "skill" courses, I welcome my students to class by calling our classroom "The Mistake Room." All of them are going to make tons of mistakes, and they need to expect—and *accept*—that fact. The courage comes from *overcoming* the inevitable mistakes and turning them gradually into successes. The woman who started the Huffington Post once said that she had a plaque on her desk that read, "Make New Mistakes." I couldn't put it better. Mistakes are to be expected. You just can't make the same mistakes over and over. Learn from your mistakes. Then make new mistakes. And never stop. As long as you're making mistakes, you can be sure that you're learning. And learning should only stop with your last breath.

Epilogue

I guess nonfiction books aren't supposed to have an epilogue. But, somehow, I think it fits here. All good things must come to an end. Even though I don't know you personally, as I do my students, I feel as if we've been on a journey together. I've been teaching and working with you to help you get want you want—a career on the creative side of advertising. Our journey has been a long and, as promised, bumpy ride. Advertising is like that. And those who thrive in it are those who crave that wild, wild ride. I hope this book has helped you decide whether the creative side of advertising is right for you, and, if it is, how to go about getting into "the business." You won't always be happy, but I guarantee you'll never be bored.

Resources

All of you know your way around the Internet better than I ever could know. You grew up with it, and it's part of you. As I said earlier, it's easy to study advertising because it's all around us—in the real world and the virtual world. The important thing, however, is *not* to view what you see as a *consumer* of advertising, but as a *student* of advertising. Always keep your "student hat" firmly on your head. If you do, you'll learn so, so much just by looking around you and around the Internet. Always be analyzing, critiquing, and questioning. Why does this commercial work for you? Why doesn't it? What is this ad doing right? Why is this ad on the very next page not doing things right? In my copywriting classes, we do this very same exercise, which I call, "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly." I put those three headings on the board and we look at hundreds of print ads (because they stay in one place and we can really study them), and the students vote into which of the three categories the ads belong. As I said earlier, you can learn as much from bad advertising as you can from good advertising. Look around you at billboards, browse magazines, watch commercials, listen to radio, surf the Internet, peruse the social media sites. Absorb the good, the bad, and the ugly. This will make your own work better and better. You'll gradually be able to edit your own work and spot great ideas from mediocre ones to the downright ugly ones. This is an essential part of becoming an advertising professional. Having said all that, here are a few sites that I think will be particularly important for you.

YOUTUBE

Everything is on YouTube. It's a great way to look and analyze current, old, and vintage TV campaigns, jingles, etc. For samples of print ads, out-of-home, and other static media, an image search on Google is equally indispensable and will give you thousands of examples to study.

COMMUNICATION ARTS (CA) MAGAZINE

Communication Arts has an advertising awards annual every year that's must reading, as are *all* its advertising annuals, as far back as you can find them. When my Van Camp's pork 'n beans campaign won in 1979, it was one of the highlights of my career. These annuals are a particularly great place to study print advertising at its best. I think most people in the business would say that *CA* is the most prestigious and toughest of the award contests to win.

THE SIREN AWARDS

The Siren Awards site (www.sirenawards.com/au) is a great place to listen to the most inventive radio commercials and campaigns. It's international, and you'll find that many countries are doing far more clever work in radio than we're doing in the United States.

OUTDOOR ADVERTISING ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

The Outdoor Advertising Association of American (www.oaaa.org) sponsors the Obie Awards, which recognize excellence in out-of-home. Reviewing some of the award-winners is a great way to invigorate your creativity in this suddenly revived medium.

AMERICAN ADVERTISING FEDERATION

Visit the American Advertising Federation (AAF) website at www.aaf.org. Many college advertising programs have student chapters of the AAF, and many advertising campaign courses use the AAF's yearly case study as their core. Besides that, however, the AAF sponsors the ADDY awards at the national, regional, and local levels. The AAF also has student-only sections. This site is a treasure trove of excellent advertising in all media. It's especially instructive to see how clever and inventive local advertising can be with very limited budgets.

Well, these are just a few of the hundreds of places online and off that you can find award-winning advertising to study. There are many others I could suggest—the CLIO Awards, the New York Art Director's Awards, The One Show, and on and on. Let these be just a start. As I said, you know how to poke around the Internet far better than I do. So give yourself an hour or so a day when you're relaxing before bed maybe and just look for, analyze, and critique advertising—the good of it, the bad of it, and the ugly of it.

Appendix

- A.1: Daisy Lyrics
- A.2: Grips Storyboard
- A.3: Format Sheet
- A.4: Three-Paragraph Rule

A.1: DAISY LYRICS

Here are my Daisy lyrics that we used in the radio and the TV commercial. How do yours compare? Many of my students write Daisy jingles that are equally clever, and sometimes even more so.

Daisy shaves you soft as a petal
Clean and safe it's a better way

Pick yourself a pretty little Daisy
Daisy shaves the safe way

Daisy's curved in a special way
So you can see where you're goin'

It's got twin blades to shave you clean and safe
On the legs that you'll be shown'

So pick yourself a pretty little Daisy
Daisy shaves (BEAT, BEAT) the safe way!

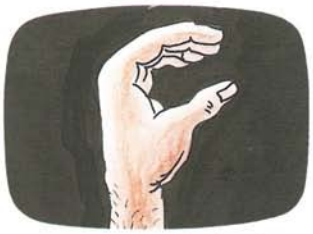
When we created a donut radio or TV spot, we would drop out the middle three stanzas and only use the opening and ending ones. When the lyrics dropped out, the instrumental would continue, however, and the announcer would talk over it. Because the lyrics and the instrumental music were on two different tracks, we could drop out the lyrics anywhere we wanted and whenever we wanted.

A.2: GRIPS STORYBOARD

Wells Lamont
GRIPS
"HUMAN HANDS"
:25 TV

WELLS LAMONT® STUBBORN ABOUT QUALITY

(DRAMATIC MUSIC UP AND UNDER)
ANNCR: (VO): The human hand.
It's not flat. It's curved.



And now—finally—there's a glove
built around it.

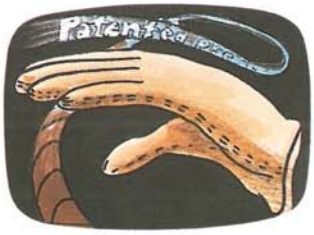
(BURST OF MUSIC)
Finally...

From Wells Lamont...

Grips.

The only all-purpose leather glove...

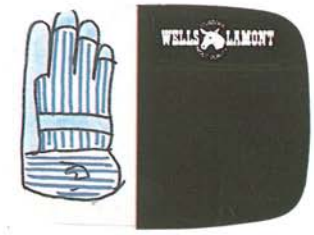
With a patented pre-curved design.



For comfortable grip

(SOUND EFFECT)
That just won't give...

Grips.
From Wells Lamont.



(DEALER TAG)

Kenyon & Eckhardt, Inc., Chicago, Illinois

A.3: FORMAT SHEET

Here is the simple format sheet that I recommend when fleshing out your print campaigns. As I said, I'd concentrate on your thinking and not distract yourself with doing layouts of any kind at this point. Once you have the campaign where you want it, then do the actual layouts yourself or, better yet, get a graphic designer to take your visual idea and copy and turn them into actual ads.

HEADLINE:

Type your headline here.

VISUAL:

Briefly describe your visual here.

BODY COPY:

Put your three paragraphs of body copy here.

CAMPAIGN THEME/ SLOGAN

Every ad in your print campaign should have a similar visual look and you can extend this sense of a collection in the copy portion of the ad with a theme line or slogan or campaign tag line, however you want to think of it. My Gatorade campaign is good example. The theme line that appeared on all three ads, right under the bottle and bolt was: When you're thirsty to win. As opposed to headlines, themes or slogans last longer, are broader in scope and relate more to the brand itself than the specific visual in any one ad.

LOGO:

Company or brand logo here.

A.4: THREE PARAGRAPH RULE

The "Three-Paragraph Rule"

Paragraph #1: Restate your headline exactly or in a slightly different way.

Paragraph #2: The headline of your ad is a benefit PROMISE to your target market. In paragraph #2, you need to "prove" and offer details, objective third-party testimonials and facts that SUPPORT the PROMISE you made in your headline. Go online and DIG. Find out facts. Third-person, objective endorsements and/or testimonials carry lots of weight because your target market will see them as objective and "true."

Paragraph #3: Restate your headline AGAIN (or a slight variation of it). Then let the target market know what you want them to do next – your call-to-action. Because of the smartphone, a QR code is often a print-ad's call-to-action. But you also can direct the target maket to call a toll-free phone number, go to a website, or visit one or more specific retailers. If your need to, you can do ALL of these.

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"Never Hide ad #3," Source: Bausch & Lomb.
"Never Hide ad #4," Source: Bausch & Lomb.
"We Need Bullets…" Source: Committee for Handgun Control.
"We Need Bullets… ad #2," Source: Committee for Handgun Control.

"We Need Bullets… ad #3," Source: Committee for Handgun Control.

"Bullets… ad," Source: *Time* Magazine.

"Grips storyboard," Source: Kenyon & Eckhardt, Inc.